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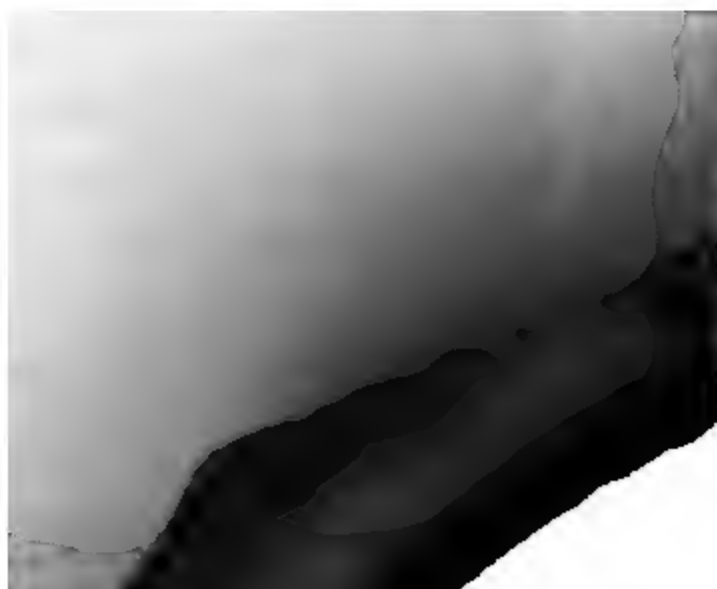
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S E R M O N XIII.

OF THE TRUTH AND DIVINITY OF THE
CHRISTIAN RELIGION.

EPH. i. 13.

*In whom ye also (trusted), having heard the word of truth,
the gospel of your salvation.*

THAT our religion in gross is true and agreeable **SERM. XIII.**
to reason, is a ground upon which the truth of its
single doctrines and articles of faith doth lean; it is
therefore requisite that it first be well supported, or
that we be thoroughly assured thereof. Being there-
fore engaged at other times to discourse upon the
particular points of Christian doctrine, which sup-
pose this general one; I shall take occasion collate-
rally in these exercises to insist upon this subject;
supposing in those, what in these we shall endea-
vour to prove; so both avoiding there such grand
digressions, or the treating upon matters not directly
incident; and supplying here what seems necessary
or useful there to the confirmation of our faith.

Now in the words I did now read, St. Paul styles
the Christian doctrine (and in many other places of
scripture it is also so called) *the word of truth*, (that

ERM. is, a most true doctrine,) and *the gospel of our sal-*
 XIII. *vation*, (that is, a message brought from heaven by
 our Saviour and his apostles; in which the ways
 and means of attaining salvation, (that is, of that
 best happiness which we are capable of,) the over-
 tures thereof from God, and the conditions in order
 thereto required from us, are declared.) And that
 we have reason to entertain it as such, I shall im-
 mediately address myself to shew.

ἰξίταξι, It was anciently objected by Celsus and other ad-
 λὰ πίστιν- versaries of our religion, that Christianity did exact
 Orig. i. from men ψιλὴν καὶ ἄλογον πίστιν, a *bare groundless*
 f. 8, 9. *faith*; did impose νόμους ἀναποδείκτους, *laws incapable*
 g. vi. *of proof*, (that is, as to the goodness and reasonable-
 f. 282. *ness of them*;) did inculcate this rule, Μὴ ἐξέταζε, ἀλλὰ
 ἤνασι θί- *μόνον πίστευε*, *Do not examine or discuss, but only*
 ἢ ἀπιθι. *believe*; that it debarred inquiries and debates about
 truth, slighted the use and improvement of reason,
 rejected human learning and wisdom, enjoining men
 to swallow its dictates, without chewing, or any pre-
 vious examination concerning the reason and truth
 of them.

The ground of this accusation was surely a great
 mistake, arising from their not distinguishing that
 belief, whereby we embrace Christianity itself in
 gross, from that belief, whereby in consequence to the
 former we assent to the particular doctrines thereof:
 especially to such as concern matters supernatural, or
 exceeding the reach of our natural understanding to
 penetrate or comprehend. For as to the first kind,
 that belief whereby we embrace Christianity itself, as
 true in the gross; I say, it is nowise required upon
 such terms; our religion doth not obtrude itself
 upon men in the dark, it doth not bid men to put

out their eyes, or to shut them close; no, nor even to wink, and then to receive it: it rather obliges them to open their eyes wide, to go into the clearest light; with their best senses to view it thoroughly, before they embrace it. It requires not, yea it refuses, ordinarily, a sudden and precipitate assent; admitting no man (capable of judging and choosing for himself) to the participation thereof, or acknowledging him to be a believer indeed; till (after a competent time and means of instruction) he declares himself to understand it well, and heartily to approve it. Never any religion was so little liable to that censure; none ever so freely exposed itself to a fair trial at the bar of reason; none ever so earnestly invited men to consider and weigh its pretences; yea, provoked them, for its sake and their own, (at the peril of their souls, and as they tendered their own best good and safety,) to an *εὐγνώμων, ἐξέτασις*, an equal and discreet examination thereof. Other religions have for their justification insisted upon the examples of ancestors, the prescriptions and customs of times, their large extent and prevalence among multitudes of people, their establishment by civil laws, and countenance of secular powers, (arguments wholly extrinsecal and of small validity,) declining all other test or trial of reason: yea, it is remarkable how Celsus, and others who made the foresaid objection, did contradict and confute themselves, affirming men ought without scruple to conform in opinion and practice to the religion prescribed by the laws of their country, be they what they will, never so absurd or dishonest^a.

SERM. XIII.

Vid. Orig. in Cels. lib. iii. pag. 142.

Ὁ ταῦτα πιστεύσας οὐκ ἀπλῶς, οὐδὲ ἀλόγως, ἀλλὰ περισίτοι καὶ πληροφορίᾳ, χάρισμα ἡλληφειν ἐκ θεοῦ, &c. Const. Apost. viii. 1.

Hæ sunt religiones, &c. Lactant. ii. 6. (pag. 171.)

Orig. v. pag. 248, &c.

^a Quæ omnia sapiens servabit tanquam legibus jussa, non tanquam Diis grata. Sen. apud Aug. de Civ. Dei, vi. 10.

SERM. Δεῖ φυλάσσειν τὰ εἰς κοινὸν κεκυρωμένα, (things established
XIII. by common authority must be observed :) and, τὰ παρ'

ἐκάστοις ὀρθῶς ἂν πράττοιτο ταύτῃ δρώμενα, ὅπῃ ἐκείνοις φίλον,
(things are every where rightly done, being done according to the fashion of each place.) Such were the rules and maxims those men urged. And this was indeed exacting irrational belief; a stifling men's reason, and muzzling their judgments; this was a method enforcing men blindly to yield consent to errors and inconsistencies innumerable. But the teachers and maintainers of Christianity proceeded otherwise; confiding in the pure merit of their cause, they warned men to lay aside all prejudices; to use their best understandings; in a case of such moment, to apply themselves to an industrious and impartial search of the truth: let one for the rest speak their

Lact. ii. 7. sense: *Oportet in ea re maxime, in qua vitæ ratio versatur, sibi quemque confidere, suoque iudicio ac propriis sensibus niti ad investigandam et perpendendam veritatem, quam credentem alienis erroribus decipi tanquam ipsum rationis expertem: dedit omnibus Deus pro virili portione sapientiam, ut et inaudita investigare possent, et audita perpendere: We ought especially, says he, every one of us in that matter, which chiefly concerns our manner of life, to confide in ourselves; and rather with our own judgment and our proper senses strive to find out and judge of the truth, than believing other*

Omnem istam ignobilem Deorum turbam, quam longo ævo longa superstitio congegit sic (inquit) adorabimus, ut meminimus cultum ejus magis ad morem, quam ad rem pertinere. *Id.* 16.

—Colebat quod reprehendebat, agebat quod arguebat, quod culpabat adorabat. *Aug. ib. de Seneca.*

men's errors to be deceived, like things void of SERM. XIII.
 reason : God hath given all men a competent share
 of wisdom, that they might both search out things
 not told them, and weigh what they hear. So
 especially just and candid was Christianity in its
 first offering itself to the minds of men. It pro-
 pounds indeed and presses, as evident in itself, the
 worth and consequence of the matter ; but refers the
 decision on either part (so far as concerns every par-
 ticular man) to the verdict of that reason and con-
 science, with which to such purposes God hath in-
 dued every man. And that it can proceed no other-
 wise appears further, from the nature of that faith Εξῆς προαι-
 ρητικὴ μετ'
 ἀληθοῦς λό-
 γου, ἰερούσιος
 συγκατάθε-
 σις. Clem.
 Alex.
 it requires : it commends faith as a great virtue, and
 therefore supposes it both voluntary and reasonable ;
 it promises ample rewards thereto, and so implies it
 a work not of necessity or chance, but of care and
 industry ; it declares infidelity to be very blameable,
 and threatens severe punishment thereto ; why ? be-
 cause it signifies irrational negligence or perverse-
 ness.

In fine, Christianity doth not inveigle any man by
 sleight, nor compel him by force, (being indeed com-
 monly destitute of those advantages ; nor being able
 to use them, if it would,) but fairly by reason per-
 suades him to embrace it ; it doth not therefore shun
 examination, nor disclaim the judgment of reason ;
 but earnestly seeks and procures the one, cheerfully
 and confidently appeals to the other. *Examine all* 1 Thess. v.
 21.
things ; hold fast that which is good. Believe not 1 John iv. 1.
every spirit, but try the spirits, whether they be of
God. See that no man deceive you. Be always Mat. xxiv. 4.
 Eph. v. 6.
ready, with meekness and respect, to give to every 1 Pet. iii. 15.
one that demands it of you an account of the hope

SERM. *in you.* These are the maxims which Christianity
XIII. goes upon in the propagation and maintenance of
itself.

Indeed after it hath convinced men of its truth in general, having evidenced the truth of its fundamental principles, it then requires a full and cordial assent, without exception, to its particular doctrines, grounded upon or deduced from them. When, I say, it hath, to the satisfaction of a man's mind, with solid reason made good its principles; it then enjoins men to surcease further scruple or debate concerning what it teaches or draws from them; which is a proceeding most reasonable and conformable to the method used in the strictest sciences: for the principles of any science being either demonstrated out of some higher science, or evidenced by fit experiments to common sense; and being thence granted and received, it is afterward unlawful and absurd to challenge the conclusions collected from them; so if it have been proved and acknowledged that our principles are true, (for instance, that God is perfectly veracious, and that Christian religion hath *his* authority, or attestation to it,) it will then be a part of absurd levity and inconsistency to question any particular proposition evidently contained therein; and in this sense or in these cases it is true indeed that Christianity doth engage us to believe simply and purely, doth silence natural reason, and condemn curious inquiry, and prohibit dispute, especially to persons of meaner capacities or improvements. And thus, I take it, those Christians of old were to be understood, who so much commended immediate faith, excluded reason from being too busy in matters of religion, discountenanced that curiosity which

searched into, and would needs sound, those inscrutable mysteries which our religion teaches. Our religion then will allow (yea it invites and exhorts) an infidel to consider and judge of its truth, although it will not allow a Christian to be so vain and inconstant, as to doubt of any particular doctrine therein; seeing by so questioning a part, he in effect renounces the whole, and subverts the foundation of his faith; at least ceases thereby to be a steady Christian. I might then well invert our adversaries' discourse, and offer it as a good argument of our religion its truth, that it alone among all religions, with a candour and confidence peculiar to truth, calls us to the light, is willing, yea desirous, to undergo trial; I add, yea challenges, as its due from all men, and demands it of them as a necessary duty, to hear it, to consider it seriously, to pass sentence upon it; for as commonly error and groundless conceit, being conscious of their own weakness, are timorous and suspicious, and thence ready to decline all proof and conflict of reason; so truth, knowing its own strength, is daring and resolute; enters boldly into the lists, being well assured (or hopeful) of good success in the combat.

Which proceeding, proper to Christianity, is in itself very plausible, and may well beget a favourable prejudice on its side; and that it is not confident without reason, will appear upon our examining the principles and grounds on which it stands. The first principle of Christianity (common thereto and all other religions) is, that there is one God, (sovereign and transcendent in all perfections; the Maker and Governor of all things.) The next (which also no religion doth not acknowledge) is, that God

SERM.
XIII.

Bas. in Ps.

^{15.}

John iii.
^{21, 22.}

SERM. is perfectly veracious, so that whatever appears to
XIII. be asserted, or attested to, by him, is certainly true; which principles (by reasons I hope proper and sufficient) I partly have proved, and partly shall hereafter upon occasion shew. A third is, that God is the author of the Christian doctrine and law; that he hath revealed this doctrine to mankind, and confirmed it by his testimony; that he hath imposed this law upon us, and established it by his authority. This principle (being the foundation and sum of our faith) involves matter of fact; and consequently, being not evident immediately in itself, doth (for a full conviction of a man's mind, and producing therein a solid persuasion) require a rational probation; and that it may appear we believe it like reasonable men, not (as pagans and Mahometans, and those of other sects do^a,) upon wilful resolution, or by mere chance, as also for settling the ground of particular articles comprehended under this, I shall endeavour to shew the reasonableness thereof; advancing my discourse by several steps and degrees. I observe first, that,

1. It is reasonable to suppose that God should at some time or season fully and clearly reveal unto men the truth concerning himself, and concerning them, as he and they stand related to each other; concerning his nature and will, concerning our state and duty, respectively: the nature and attributes of God, the nature and qualities of man, being compared, do persuade thus much.

It is apparent to common experience, that man-

^a Μάθωμεν τοίνυν οὕτω πρὸς Ἕλληνας διαλέγεσθαι, ἵνα μὴ ὦμεν ὡς θρέμματα καὶ βοσκήματα, ἀλλ' ὦμεν παρσκευασμένοι περὶ τῆς ἐν ἡμῖν ἐλπίδος. Chrys. in 1 Cor. i. 17.

kind being left to itself (especially in matters of this kind) is very insufficient to direct itself; that it is apt to lie under woful ignorance, to wander in uncertainty, to fall into error, to possess itself with vain conceit, to be abused with any sort of delusion, which either the malice of wicked spirits, or the subtilty of naughty men, or the wildness of its own fond passions and desires can put upon it or bring it under; it is consequently exposed to all those vices, dishonourable, hurtful, and destructive to its nature; and to all those miseries, which from ignorance or error, from vice and wickedness, do naturally spring; especially to an estrangement from God, and an incapacity of his love and favour. The two only remedies of all these mischiefs, natural light and primitive tradition, how little they did avail to cure them; how the one was too faint in itself, and easily lost in mists of prejudice from ill education and bad custom, prevailing generally; how the other (besides its other defects) soon was polluted, and indeed quite spoiled by adulterate mixtures of fond, impure, and vile superstitions, woful experience doth more than enough evince. We see, that not only the generality of mankind did sometime lie in this sad condition, but that even the most elevated and refined wits (those among men who by all possible improvement of their reason did endeavour to raise themselves from this low estate; to rescue their minds from the common ignorance, the mistakes, the superstitions and follies of the world) could by no means in any good measure attain those ends; for what did their earnest inquiries or their restless studies produce, but dissatisfaction and perplexity of mind? wherein did their eager disputations conclude, but in irre-

SERM. XIII. concilable differences of opinion, and greater uncertainties than were when they began? Most were plunged into a desperate scepticism, (a doubt and diffidence of all things;) none arrived higher than some faint conjectures on some unsteady opinions concerning those matters of highest consequence; such notions as were not effectual enough to produce in them a practice, in any good measure, suitable to the dignity of man's nature, to the duty he owes to God, to the capacities man hath of doing and receiving good; from which due glory to God or much benefit to man did accrue. *Ἐματαιώθησαν ἐν τοῖς διαλογισμοῖς, they were made vain* (or, they were frustrated, deluded, befooled) in their reasonings and disputes; the result of their busy speculations was, that *their foolish heart was darkened*; so darkened, that with all the light they had, they could not see any thing; at least not clearly discern what chiefly it concerned them to know; *The world by wisdom* (by all the wisdom it could get) *did not know God*; did not acquire a requisite measure of knowledge in divine things: did not however know him so, as to glorify him; as to thank him for the benefits received from him; as to bring forth worthy fruits of piety and virtue. So much St. Paul observed of them; and not he alone did observe it, but even themselves were sensible of this their unhappiness; whence so many complaints concerning the blindness and infirmity of man's mind, concerning the obscurity and uncertainty of things, concerning the insuperable difficulty of finding truth, concerning the miserable consequences from these, do occur among them.

Rom. i. 21.
Eph. iv. 17.

1 Cor. i. 21.

Rom. i. 21,
&c. 18.

—Hinc
causa mali
mortalibus
ægris Naturam
nescire
Dei.

Now this being the natural state of men, desti-

tute of divine conduct and assistance; do they not SERM. XIII.
(I pray) greatly need another light to guide them

in this darkness, or to bring them out of it; a helpful hand, to free them from these inconveniences? and is it not reasonable to suppose, that God, who is alone able, will also be willing in due time to afford it? He, who in nature is most benign and bountiful, most pitiful and gracious; whose goodness fills the Ps. xxxiii. 5. civ. 24. earth, and whose mercy is over all his works; he, who bears to man the special relation of a Father, and bears to him a suitable tenderness of affection and good-will; he, all whose attributes seem concerned in engaging him upon this performance; not only his goodness to *instigate* him, and his wisdom to *direct* him, but even his justice in some manner to *oblige* him thereto.

1. His goodness: *Can a woman forget her suck-* Isa. xlix. 15.
ing child, that she should not have compassion on
the son of her womb? Yea; though it is unnatural and unusual, it is yet possible she may, because nature in her is not unalterably constant and the same; but the immutable God cannot so cease to be mindful of, to be compassionate toward, his children. That gracious ear cannot hear mankind groan so dolefully under bitter oppressions; that pitiful eye cannot behold his own dear offspring, the flower of his creation, lying in so comfortless, so remediless distress, without feeling some pity, without being moved to reach some relief; such notes surely cannot be grateful, such spectacles cannot be pleasant to him, nor can he then forbear long to provide means of removing them from his presence. We esteem it want of goodness (yea an effect of very bad disposition) not to direct a bewildered traveller,

SERM. not to relieve, if we can, even a stranger fallen into
 XIII. great distress : and if we being in such degree bad,
 are inclinable to perform such good offices, how much
 more ready may we suppose him, who is goodness
 itself, (goodness infinite and absolute,) to do the like
 for all mankind, so much needing his guidance and
 help ! He who hath settled our outward estate in
 so advantageous a posture, who hath made provi-
 sions so various and ample for the needs and con-
 veniences (yea for the pleasure) of our bodies, would
 he have so little care over our better part, and leave
 our souls so slenderly furnished, letting them pine,
 as it were, for want of spiritual sustenance ? How
 can we think his good providence defective in so
 main, so principal a part thereof ? Thus doth divine
 goodness (to my apprehension) very strongly con-
 firm our supposition.

Vid. Ezek.
 16.

2. And his wisdom enforces the same : God made
 the world to express his goodness and to display his
 glory ; and his goodness who can be sensible of, his
 glory who can perceive, who can promote, but man ?
 but he who is endued with reason, enabling him to
 reflect upon the good he feels, to admire the excel-
 lency he discovers, to render grateful acknowledg-
 ments for the one, to utter acclamations of praise to
 the other ? which purposes yet will be utterly (or at
 least in great measure) frustrated, should God for
 ever suffer men to continue in such ignorance, doubt,
 or mistake concerning himself ; if men are not fully
 persuaded that he made the world and governs it,
 how can they pay those due homages of dread to
 his glorious power, of admiration to his excellent
 wisdom, of love to his transcendent goodness ? This
 grand theatre would, as it were, stand useless, and

all the wonders acted thereupon would appear in vain, should there be wanting a spectator; should man be altogether blind or heedless; yea man's faculty itself, that his seeing faculty of mind, would signify nothing, were there not a light rendering things visible to him. Common sense hath dictated to men, that man is capable of shewing respect, of performing duty and service, to God, that also God requires and expects them from him; the same declares, that God best knows what kinds of service, what expressions of respect best please him. Reason tells, that God would have man act in the best manner, according to the design of his nature; that he would have the affairs of men proceed in some good order; that he even desires earnestly the good of men, and delights in their happiness: and if so, it is reasonable to suppose, that being most wise he should dispose fit means for accomplishing those ends; for securing himself, as it were, from disappointment; that therefore he should impart to men a competent knowledge of himself, should declare his good-will and pleasure to them, should reveal both the best way of their serving him, and the best means of their attaining happiness to themselves. So divine wisdom grounds an argument for our supposition.

3. God's justice also seems not a little to favour it: every good governor thinks it just to take care that his subjects should understand his pleasure, and be acquainted with his laws; he causes them therefore to be solemnly promulgated, that all may take notice; if any of them by long disuse are become unknown, he revives the knowledge of them by new proclamations; to quicken obedience he propounds

SERM. fit rewards, and deters from disobedience by menac-
XIII. ing suitable punishments, knowing man's nature,
 resty and unapt to move without these spurs: and is it likely the sovereign Governor and Judge of all the world should observe less equity in his administrations? that he should neglect any means necessary or apt to promote his subjects' performance of their duty, to prevent the breaches of his laws? He that loves righteousness above all, he that so earnestly desires to be duly obeyed, he that infinitely delights in his subjects' good; can he fail sufficiently to declare his will, to encourage men to comply with it, to terrify them from transgressing it? will he suffer his laws to remain unknown, or uncertain; will he not consider the infirmities of his subjects, will he leave any fair apology for disobedience? No, the superlative justice of God seems to persuade the contrary.

Acts x. 38.
 Eph. ii. 2.

4. I might add, that generally it seems unbecoming the Majesty Divine, that he should endure the world, his kingdom, to continue under a perpetual usurpation and tyranny; to suffer that his imperial throne should be possessed, his authority abused, his name insulted over, by enemies and rebels against him, (by evil spirits, whether those of hell or those on earth;) that a cruel fiend, that a cursed ghost, that a brute beast, that a chimera of man's fancy should be worshipped, while himself is forgotten and neglected, is dishonoured and despised; that iniquity and wickedness (with all the filthy brood of ignorance and error) should every where flourish and domineer, while righteousness and virtue lie prostrate, and are trampled upon: this surely the King of Glory, the great Patron of goodness, will not permit

to be ; sooner rather may we conceive, that, to re- SERM.
move these indecencies and these mischiefs, he would XIII.
presently turn the world into a desert and solitude,
or pour a deluge of water over the face of the earth,
or with flames of vengeance consume it into ashes.

We cannot indeed judge or determine concerning
the special circumstances or limits of God's dealing
toward man in this particular ; concerning the time
when, the manner how, the measure according to
which, God will dispense those revelations of himself:
those depend upon mysteries of counsel and wisdom
surpassing our comprehension. That God should for Acts xvii.
a while connive at men's ignorance, and suffer them 27, 30.
to grope after divine truth ; to try them, as he did xiv. 16.
the Israelites in the wilderness, how they would be- Deut. viii.
have themselves in that state ; to prove how they 15, 16.
would use their talent of natural light, to make them Exod. xvi.
sensible of their own infirmity, to shew them whence 8.
all their welfare must proceed, on whom all their
happiness depends, to make them more able to va-
lue, more desirous to embrace, the redress vouchsafed
them ; as also, to demonstrate his own great clemen-
cy, longsuffering, and patience ; that, I say, for such Vid. Gen.
purposes, and others unsearchable by our shallow un- xv. xvi. &c.
derstanding, God should for some time forbear with
a full evidence to declare all his mind to men, is not
so strange or unlikely ; but that for ever, through
all courses of time, he should leave men in so forlorn
a condition, in such a depth of ignorance, such per-
plexity of doubt, such captivity under sin, such sub-
jection to misery, seems not probable, much less can
it seem unprobable that he hath done it : it cannot,
I say, in any reason seem misbecoming the goodness,
wisdom, or justice of God, clearly to discover to us,

SERM. what he requires us to do, what good he intends for
XIII. us, what way leads to our happiness, how we may
avoid misery. This consideration, if it do not prove
peremptorily that God cannot but sometime make
such a revelation, nor that he yet hath actually done
it, (forasmuch as we cannot reach the utmost pos-
sibilities of things, nor are fit judges of what God
must necessarily do; although to my apprehension
this sort of reasoning, with due caution used, subsist-
ing in general terms, and not over precisely applying
it to particular cases (implicated by circumstances
and specialties not falling under our judgment) hath
great force;) yet it removes all obstruction to our be-
lief, and disposes us with more readiness to admit the
reasons which follow: for it being not unprobable,
yea, according to the reason of the thing, very pro-
bable, that he should do it, we have cause with at-
tention and expectation of success on this hand to
regard the arguments that pretend to prove he hath
done it.

This is the first step of our Discourse, at which we
shall stop for the present.

And in Jesus Christ, &c.

S E R M O N XIV.

OF THE IMPIETY AND IMPOSTURE OF
PAGANISM AND MAHOMETANISM.

EPH. i. 13.

*In whom ye also (trusted), having heard the word of truth,
the gospel of your salvation.*

THAT the Christian doctrine is what St. Paul here S E R M.
XIV. calls it, *a word of truth*, and did proceed from the God of truth, is the proposition we are endeavouring to verify and persuade. To that purpose we did first discourse, that it is very probable God should sometime clearly and fully reveal his mind to men, concerning matters relating to his own glory and service, their good and happiness.

II. I now proceed another step, and assert, that no other revelation of that kind and importance hath been made; that no other religion, which hath been or is now in being, can with good probability pretend to have thus proceeded from God; so as by him to have been designed for a general, a perpetual, a complete instruction and obligation of mankind. There have appeared but *three* pretences thereto;

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that of ancient Paganism, that of Mahometanism, and that of Judaism, (for the more particular pretensions of enthusiastical impostors have been subordinate either to Christianity itself, or to one of those; and besides having found no considerable progress or continuance in the world, nor countenance, as it were, from Providence, are not pertinent to this consideration, besides that they are all generally disclaimed;) but that none of those three pretences are well grounded, I shall, examining each briefly, shew: (briefly, I say, for I need not insist on them largely, the matter having passed so many good pens, especially that excellent one of Grotius; however, it falling in my way and method, I shall offer what hath concerning it occurred to my thoughts.)

For the first, ancient Paganism; it did indeed (in the parcels thereof, or by retail) pretend to a kind of divine revelation; that it derived its notions and its forms of practice from the direction of invisible powers, given to single persons or places, in several ways, (by immediate apparition, by prophetic inspiration, by significant events or prodigies;) but it did not, nor could pretend to any one uniform revelation from the sovereign God, solemnly delivered and directed to all mankind; which is an argument, not only that those pretended revelations were imperfect and insufficient to the ends propounded, but also false and counterfeit: for we may well suspect those edicts which are clancularly set up in corners, and which run not in the king's name, nor are marked with his royal signature, to have proceeded from impostors or from rebels; especially if the matter of them doth not advance, but depress his authority; doth not promote, but prejudice his in-

terest ; doth not comport with, but contravene his SERM.
XIV.
pleasure, otherwise declared. And such was the
manner, such the matter of those pagan revelations.
Put the whole body of that religion (if I may so call
it) together, and you have nothing but a lump of
confusion and inconsistency, of deformity and filthi-
ness, of vanity and folly, little as may be therein
tending to the reverence of God, or to the good of
man^a ; to the promoting virtue and goodness in hu-
man conversation, to the breeding love and good-
will in men toward one another, to the maintaining
justice, peace, and good order in societies ; much
apt to produce the contrary effects. It was not, I
say, ever one simple or uniform, one fixed or con-
stant thing, but, according to difference of place and
time, various and mutable ; diversely shaped and
modelled, according to the fancy and humour, de-
sign or interest of the state that allowed it, the
priests that managed it, and the people that received
it ; a plain sign, that (excepting some general scat-
tered notions deduced from ancient tradition) it did
wholly proceed from human device, or from a worse
cause, the suggestion of evil spirits, abusing the
fondness and pravity of men. Survey it, and what
shall you find therein, but a bundle of idle, ill-con-
trived, incredible, and inconsistent stories, (arguing
nothing of truth or sincerity, little of wit or discre-
tion in those who invented them ;) those attended
by practices foolish, lewd, and cruel ; unworthy of
human nature, contrary to common sense and ho-
nesty ? Their worship (that of the supreme Lord

^a Inde furor vulgo, quod numina vicinorum

Odit uterque locus, dum solos credit habendos

Esse Deos, quos ipse colit.—

Juv. Sat. xv.

SERM. being neglected, &c.) you will see directed towards
XIV. objects most improper and unbecoming: to the
ghosts of dead men; men in their lives (if we may trust the reports of their devoutest adorers) famous for nothing so much as for vicious enormities, for thefts and rapines, for murders and parricides, for horrid lusts, adulteries, rapes, and incests; and such persons, alive or dead, what good or wise man would not rather loathe and despise, than worship or respect? to somewhat, though not otherwise, yet in degree of nature, worse than those, even to brute beasts; to the most vile, the most mischievous of them, (dogs, serpents, crocodiles;) to pay veneration unto which, how unspeakably abject a mind doth it argue! Yea they stooped lower, even to creatures inanimate, to the stars and elements, to rivers and trees, and other such things, which we see acting by natural necessity, not yielding any signification of understanding, of sense, of life, in them; which therefore, so far inferior to us in nature, how sottish a baseness was it to adore! nay, they descended to a lower degree, if it may be, of folly, dedicating temples and offering sacrifices to things even void of subsistence, to mere qualities and accidents of things, to the passions of our minds, to the diseases of our bodies, to the accidents of our lives. Who would think any man could be so mad as to reckon impudence, that odious vice; a fever, that troublesome disease; or fortune, (that unaccountable name of nothing, which wise men so little trust, and fools so much complain of,) among things divine and venerable? Can I mention any thing worse than all these, which the degenerate ignorance and naughtiness of man hath crouched to? Yes,

(with a folly of all most wretched and deplorable,) **SERM.**
they fawned upon, they obeyed, they offered their **XIV.**
dearest pledges of life and fortune to the sworn enemies, as of God and goodness, so of their own good and welfare, to the very cursed fiends of hell: whom, if they had not been extremely blind and senseless, by the quality of those rites and mysteries they suggested, (so bloody and cruel, so lewd and foul,) they might easily have detected to be so. Such objects as these was their devotion spent upon, to these they paid their respect, in these they reposed their confidence. And was such a religion likely to proceed from God? was it like to produce any glory to him, or any benefit to man? From such thorns, what fruits can we hope should sprout of good life, of sound morality? what piety toward God, what justice, truth, or goodness toward man; what sobriety or purity in themselves, can we expect should arise from such conceits and such practices? Surely no other than those which St. Paul describes in the first chapter of his Epistle to the Romans, and in the second of the Epistle to the Ephesians, and St. Peter, 1 Ep. iv. 3. which history plainly shews to have been no slanderous imputations upon Gentilism. If any good did appear in the conversation of some men who followed that religion, it is not to be imputed to the influence of that, but to some better cause; to the relics of good nature; to the glimmerings of natural light breaking forth in some, and by their precept or example conveyed to others; to the necessary experience concerning the mischiefs of vice and advantages of virtue; or perhaps also to secret whispers and impressions of divine grace upon some men's minds, vouchsafed in pity to them,

SERM. and others whom they might teach or lead into
 XIV. ways somewhat better than those common ones of
 extreme wickedness and folly : to these, I say, or
 such causes, all instances of practice in any measure
 innocent or commendable may rather be ascribed,
 than to that religion, which was much apter to cor-
 rupt and debauch, than to better or civilize men ;
 for with what intention soever they were spoken,
 there was not much of real calumny in those words
 of Lucretius,

————— sæpius olim

Religio peperit scelerata, atque improba facta.

But it is needless to discourse much against that
 which hath no reasonable patron, and which scarce
 any wise man, when it was in fashion, did seriously
 think to have had any truth or reality in it. Plato,
 you know, often inveighs against the inventors of
 those beastly fables in heathen theology, (upon
 which yet all the economy of their religious prac-
 tice did depend ;) Aristotle attributes the constitu-
 tion of those religions to the subtilty of statesmen:
 there is none of the Fathers, I think, or any other
 disputer against heathenism, who hath more di-
 rectly or earnestly oppugned it than Pliny hath.
 There was few, or none, of the philosophers, who
 did not signify his dislike or contempt of the vulgar
 opinions and practices concerning religion ; what
 Cicero saith of one part, the wiser sort did judge of
 all : *Tota res est inventa fallaciis aut ad quæstum,*
aut ad superstitionem, aut ad errorem,^b (The whole
 business was deceitfully forged either for gain, or

Arist. Me-
taph. xii. 8.

Lib. ii. cap.

7.
Vid. Plut.
de Superst.
p. 291.

De Leg. x.
&c.

De Div. ii.
p. 240.

Tusc. ix. 1.
Ep. 301.

^b Hæc et dicuntur et creduntur stultissime, et plena sunt futi-
litatis, summæque levitatis. *Balbus in Cic. de N. D. 2.*

Vid. August. de Civit. D. lib. iv. 33. vi. 10.

out of superstition, or from mistake.) They did indeed, most or all of them, in their external behaviour, comply with common practice, out of a politic discretion, for their safety and quiet sake: but in their inward thoughts and judgments they (as by many passages in their writings doth appear) believed nothing, nor liked any thing in it: they observed those things, as Seneca said, *tanquam legibus jussa, non tanquam diis grata*, (not as acceptable to the Gods themselves, but as commanded by the laws of their country.) And indeed this dissimulation was so notorious, that even the vulgar discerned it; and therefore seldom the wiser men were reputed among them the most religious, but liable to accusation for impiety; and some of them, ye know, suffered extremities upon that score, who could not altogether conceal that contempt, which the vanity of popular superstitions had begotten toward them in their hearts.

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I might add, that all those pagan religions did vanish together with the countenance of secular authority and power sustaining them; which shews plainly enough, that they had little or no root in the hearty belief or approbation of those who professed them.

And thus much may suffice, I suppose, to declare, that paganism did not proceed from divine revelation, but from human invention or suggestion diabolical.

I shall only adjoin, that the considering this case of heathens may be of good use (and to that use indeed St. Paul hath largely applied it) in confirming what we before urged, the great need of some full and plain revelation to the world of God's mind, in

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order to God's glory and man's good ; as also it is of singular use, (which also the same apostle frequently did put it to,) by the contemplation thereof, to discover our great obligations to bless and thank God for his great mercy in revealing his heavenly truth to us, from whence we are freed from errors and mischiefs so deplorable ; which otherwise, from human infirmity and the Devil's malice, we should easily (and in a manner necessarily) have incurred.

That pretence was ancients in standing ; but there hath, even since Christianity, started up another, (Mahometanism,) which, if not upon other accounts, yet in respect to its age, and to the port it bears in the world, demands some consideration ; for it hath continued a long time, and hath vastly overspread the earth : neither is it more formidable in its looks, than peremptory in its words ; vaunting itself to be no less than a complete, a general, an ultimate declaration of God's pleasure, cancelling and voiding all others that have gone before. But examining both the substance and circumstances thereof, considering the quality of the instruments by whom, of the times when, it was introduced ; of the places where, of the people who first or afterward did receive it ; the manner of its rise, progress, and continuance ; as also the matter it teaches or enjoins ; we shall not find stamped on it the genuine characters of a divine original and authority, but have great reason to deem it a brood of most lewd and impudent cozenage. In times of great disturbance and confusion, when barbarous nations, like torrents, did overflow the world, and turned all things upside down ; in times of general corruption and disorder in men's minds and manners, when, even

among Christians, ignorance and superstition, dissension and uncharitableness, impiety and iniquity did greatly prevail; in a very blind and obscure corner of the earth, among a crew of wild thieves and runagates, (such have those Arabians been always famed and known to be,) this sect had its birth and fosterage; among those fierce and savage overrunners of the world it got its growth and stature; into this sort of people, (being indeed in its constitution well accommodated to their humour and genius,) it was partly insinuated by juggling tricks, partly driven by seditious violence; the first author hereof being a person, according to the description given of him in their own legends, of no honest or honourable qualities, but having all the marks of an impostor; rebellious and perfidious, inhuman and cruel, lewd and lascivious, of a base education, of a fraudulent and turbulent disposition, of a vicious life, pretending to enthusiasms, and working of wonders; but these such as were both in their nature absurd and incredible, and for their use vain and unprofitable: at such a season and in such a soil, by such means and by such a person, (abetted by associates like himself, whom his arts or their interests had inveigled to join with him,) was this religion first planted; and for its propagation it had that great advantage of falling in the way of barbarous people, void of learning and civility, and not prepossessed with other notions or any sense of religion; who thence (as mankind is naturally susceptible of religious impressions) were capable and apt to admit any religion first offering itself, especially one so gross as this was, so agreeable to their furious humours and lusts. Afterward being furnished with

SERM. such champions, it diffused itself by rage and terror
XIV. of arms, convincing men's minds only by the sword,

and using no other arguments but blows. Upon the same grounds of ignorance and force it still subsists, neither offering for, nor taking against itself any reason ; refusing all examination, and, upon extreme penalties, forbidding any dispute about its truth ; being indeed so far (whether out of judgment or fatal instinct) wise, as conscious to itself, or foreboding, that the letting in of a little light, and a moderate liberty of discussing its pretences, would easily overthrow it. Now that divine wisdom should choose those black and boisterous times to publish his will, is as if the king should purposely order his proclamation to be made in a tempestuous night, when no man scarce dared to stir out, nor any man could well see what was done, or hear what was said : much fitter surely to that purpose were serene and calm day, a time of general civility and peace, like that of Augustus Cæsar. That the declaration of God's mind should issue from the deserts of Arabia, (that den of robbers,) is as if the king should cause his edicts to be set up in the blindest and dirtiest nook of the suburbs : the market-cross surely, or the exchange, (the place of most general and ordinary concourse,) such as, in respect to the world, was the flourishing empire of Rome, were more convenient, and wisely chosen for that purpose. That, passing over the more gentle and tractable part of his people, a prince should send his laws to a rabble of banditti ; should pick out for his messenger a most dissolute varlet, attended with a crew of desperate ruffians, resolved to buffet and rifle all they met, were an odd way of proceeding : to com-

communicate his pleasure unto the better and more orderly sort of people, (such as were the subjects of that well governed empire;) by persons of good meaning, mild disposition, and innocent behaviour, (such as were the apostles of our Lord;) in a quiet and gentle manner, (such as these only used;) would surely better become a worthy prince. Thus even the exterior circumstances of Mahometanism, (both absolutely and in comparison,) belonging to its rise, its growth, its continuance, (so full of indecency, of iniquity, of inhumanity,) ground strong presumptions against its divinity; or rather, plainly demonstrate that it could not proceed from God, whose truth cannot need such instruments or such courses to maintain it, whose goodness certainly abhors them. But further, if we look into the matter and inward frame thereof, we shall find it a mass of absurd opinions, odd stories, and uncouth ceremonies; compounded chiefly of the dregs of Christian heresies, together with some ingredients of Judaism and Paganism confusedly jumbled, or unskillfully tempered together. From Christian heresies it seems to have derived its negative doctrines, opposite to Christianity; as for instance, when allowing Christ much respect, it yet denies his being the Son of God, and that he did really suffer; rejecting his true story, it affixes false ones upon him: as also some positive ones; for example, that unreasonable opinion, so much misbecoming God, that God hath a body, (Mahomet, forsooth, once touched his hand, and felt it very cold,) might be drawn from the Anthropomorphites; that doctrine concerning the fatal determination of all events, (so prejudicial to all religion, subverting the foundations of justice between

SERM. God and man, man's free choice in serving God,

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God's free disposal of rewards suitable to men's actions,) they probably borrowed from the Manichees, a sect that much obtained in those eastern parts. The Jew contributed his ceremonies of circumcision and frequent purgations by washing, his abstinence from swine's flesh, his allowance of polygamy and divorce: I might add, that perhaps from him they filched that proud, inhuman, and uncivil humour of monopolizing divine favour and good-will to themselves; so of restraining their own kindness and respect to persons of their profession, or sect; condemning, despising, and hating all the world beside themselves; calling all others dogs, and adjudging all to certain damnation; and, which is more, affirming that all of their belief, how wicked soever their lives have been, shall at length assuredly partake of salvation: so partial do they make Almighty God, so addicted to a mere name and outward show, feigning him, as in shape so in passions, human and like themselves. Indeed in this main part of religion, a true notion of God, his nature, his attributes, his method of providence, their doctrine is very peccant, representing him, in his nature and actions, very unworthily. Their descriptions concerning the state of men after death, (that main and principal part of religion, which gives life and vigour to the rest,) whence can we better deduce its original, than from the pagan notions or stories of Elysium and Hades? what better pattern can we find, whence that paradise of corporeal delight, or rather of brutish sensuality, should be transcribed, which any man sees how poor an encouragement it is, how unworthy a reward, to virtue; yea, how much it is apt to de-

tract from, to discourage all performances of reason and honesty? The like we might say of the punishments (which in due correspondence to the rewards they propound) they only or chiefly inflict upon the body; the main part, it seems, of which a Mahometan man consists. And must he not be very stupid, who can suffer himself to be persuaded, that such conceits (conceits favourable indeed to pleasure, and indulgent to the flesh, but contrary to virtue, prejudicial to the spirit and reason of man) should come from the God of wisdom and holiness? Further, how Mahomet was inspired, his stories alone will evince; stories patched up out of old histories corrupted, mangled, and transplaced; interlarded with fabulous legends, contrary to all probable records of history, (the names, places, times, and all the circumstances whereof he most unskilfully changes and confounds,) yea repugnant to the nature and possibility of things; so that in a manner every tale he tells is an evident argument of an ignorant and an impudent impostor; and he that so blunders and falsifies about matters of fact, who will trust him in matters of right and reason? which things, if it were worth the while, might by various instances be shewed; and you may every where receive satisfaction therein. The like might be said concerning its multitude of silly ceremonies, grounded on no reasonable design, nor subservient to any purpose of virtue; the institution whereof no man therefore, without injury to the divine wisdom, can impute thereto. But I shall only add two further considerations upon this matter: one, that whatever is good or plausible in this religion, (such as are some precepts of justice and charity, although these con-

SERM. XIV. fined among themselves,) may reasonably be supposed taken from Christianity, which being senior in standing, may (in points wherein both agree) well go for the mistress; and however, that, upon the score of such doctrines or laws, we have no reason to think this religion came from God; for why should he reveal that again, which in a larger extent, upon better grounds, with more advantage, he had declared before; which also then was commonly embraced and acknowledged? I also observe, that this religion, by its own free concessions, doth evidently destroy itself; for it admits Christianity once to have been a true doctrine, proceeding from and attested to by God: but Christianity did ever declare itself to be a general, perpetual, perfect, and immutable rule of faith and practice; that never any accessions thereto, any alterations thereof, ought to be made or admitted; that whatever spirit, coming after it, should offer to innovate, or pretend to new discoveries contrary to, or different from it, must be suspected of delusion, foretelling and forewarning against such endeavours that should appear, as fallacious and mischievous: this, it appears, (by the writings of those who first planted Christianity, writings which no man in his wits can question to be theirs; being through a continual uninterrupted course of times, from the beginning, by general consent of both friends and adversaries, acknowledged and attested to as so; all characters within them imaginably proper for that purpose, confirming the same; as also by the current tradition of their disciples, immediate and mediate, extant in records unquestionable, and by all other means conceivable,) this, I say, it most plainly appears, was one grand

doctrine and pretence of Christianity at first, which the Mahometans acknowledging originally true and SERM. XIV. divine in the gross, must consequently grant itself to be an imposture.

And thus much seems sufficient to demonstrate that religion not to be of a divine extraction. I shall next proceed to consider the pretences of Judaism, and to shew that neither it was such a perfect revelation as we proved it probable God would vouchsafe to make. But that shall be the subject of another Discourse.

And in Jesus Christ, &c.

S E R M O N XV.

OF THE IMPERFECTION OF THE JEWISH
RELIGION.

EPH. i. 13.

*In whom ye also (trusted), having heard the word of truth,
the gospel of your salvation.*

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Heb. vii.
18, 19.

THAT it is probable God should vouchsafe to mankind a full and clear declaration of his mind and will concerning their duty and their welfare, I did shew: that Paganism and Mahometanism, without reason and truth, did or does pretend thereto, I also briefly discoursed: I now proceed to examine the plea which Judaism puts in, and to make good that neither it is well grounded, (which, as the cause deserves, I shall do somewhat more largely.) The Jewish religion we acknowledge had its birth from the revelation and appointment of God; its truth and its goodness we do not call in question: but yet looking into it, we shall find it in many respects defective, and wanting the conditions due to such a revelation as we require. For it was not universal, (neither being directed to, nor fitted for, the nature and needs of mankind;) it was not full and complete, it was not designed to be of perpetual obligation or use.

1. First, I say, this revelation was not general; SERM. XV.
 not directed to, or intended for to instruct and ob-
 lige mankind: itself expressly affirms so much; the
 whole tenor and frame thereof shews it; so do all
 the circumstances of its rise and progress. That it
 was intended peculiarly for that small nation, pos-
 sessing a very inconsiderable portion of the earth;
 distinguished, and indeed, as it were, concealed from
 the rest of mankind both on purpose and in effect;
 for it so remained for many ages (till the Macedon-
 ian first, and afterward the Roman conquests opened
 the world, and disclosed them) hid in a solitary ob-
 scurity; even so far as to scape the observation of
 the most inquisitive surveyors of the earth, the most
 curious searchers into the customs of all people, (as
 of Herodotus for instance, who, nicely describing
 the places and manners of the people all about them,
 could not discern them, and takes no notice of them,
 although for their peculiar manners otherwise most
 remarkable, and deserving his mention;) appears by
 express passages in their law and holy writings; *He* Ps. cxlvii.
sheweth his word unto Jacob, his statutes and his 19, 20.
judgments unto Israel; he hath not dealt so with
any nation; and his judgments they have not known
them. It is plainly affirmed that God did make that
 discovery of his will and mind peculiarly to that
 people, and to no other; *I the Lord am holy, and* Lev. xx. 26.
have severed you from other people, that ye should Exod.
be mine, saith God to the Jews; *So shall we be se-* xxxiii. 16.
parated, I and thy people, from all the people that They were
are upon the face of the earth, saith Moses in his not to mar-
 address to God; *Thou art a holy people unto the* ry, not to
Lord thy God; The Lord hath chosen thee to be trade, to
a special people unto himself, above all people that converse,
&c. Vid.
Grot. in
Evang. p.
130.

SERM. *are upon the face of the earth*, saith Moses to that
 XV. people : which passages (together with divers others
 Deut. vii. 6. of the same import) being used to engage and en-
 xiv. 2. courage a singular obedience, do plainly say, that
 God transacted with that people singly and sepa-
 rately from all other ; taking them on purpose, as
 it were, into a corner, at a good distance, and be-
 yond hearing of others, that he might there signify
 alone to them his pleasure, peculiarly concerning
 them. Yea to this purpose, of maintaining a dis-
 tance and distinction from the rest of mankind, di-
 vers of their laws were appointed ; as not only the
 nature of such laws doth imply, but words annexed
 Lev. xx. 24. to them sometimes express ; *I am the Lord your
 God, which have separated you from other people ;
 ye shall therefore put difference between clean
 beasts and unclean.* Whence St. Paul calls their
 Eph. ii. 14. law *μεσότοιχον φραγμῶν*, a *partition* wall, that fenced
 that nation, and severed it from others ; and an en-
 mity, being framed to set them in distance and va-
 riance from the rest of men. That whole business
 also of this constitution is frequently styled a co-
 Deut. iv. 13. venant, *made*, not between God and mankind, but
 xxix. 14, between God and that single nation ; a covenant
 25, &c. in formal terms mentioning them, and them only ;
 sealed with marks and characters peculiar to them ;
 requiring conditions and duties possible or proper
 only for them to perform ; exhibiting promises only
 suitable to them ; propounding rewards which they
 only were capable to receive, and punishments which
 they only could undergo. *Hear, O Israel*, is the
 Deut. iv. 1. usual style, according to which those laws are di-
 v. 1. vi. 3, &c. rected ; *I am the Lord thy God, which brought
 Ps. lxxxix. 8. thee out of the land of Egypt*, is the introduction

to the Decalogue itself, (which among all parts of SERM. that law looks fairest toward a general importance XV. and obligation; which yet is so specially directed, and is indeed peculiarly called the covenant between God and that people; viz. *synecdochically*, as being the principal part directive of their duty.) In the body of the laws itself, there is often made a distinction between them who were bound to observe it, and others that were not; between *brethren* and *strangers*; between *Hebrews* and *aliens*; with duties suited and limited in regard to that distinction, (as in the cases of *remitting debts, releasing servants, exacting use*, and the like :) there are enjoined duties, which others could not properly or decently perform; such as observation of feasts in commemoration and thankfulness for mercies vouchsafed to that nation; as also others which could not be observed by all men with any possibility or convenience; such as those of repairing thrice a year to one certain place, established for God's worship; of bringing tithes and oblations thither, and the like; neither was the number of Priests and Levites, set apart for God's service, proportioned otherwise, than in respect to that one people. The encouragements also and rewards promised to obedience do incommunicably pertain to them, as also the discouragements from, and punishments for, disobedience; a long and prosperous enjoyment of the land of Canaan was the meed set before them, if they should obey and make good their part of the covenant; a dispossession thereof, or affliction in it, was the punishment threatened, if they should presume to disobey and violate those engagements; *Ye shall walk in all the laws, which the Lord your God hath com-*

Deut. iv. 13.
Exod. xxxiv. 28.

Deut. xvii. 15. i. 16.
Exod. xxv. 46.

Deut. xv. 3, 12.

Lev. xxv. 47, &c.

Deut. xvi. 1. 16.

xiv. 21, &c.
Exod. xxiii. 19, &c.

19, &c.

Deut. v. 33.
vi. 3, &c.
Moses novus ritus,

SERM. *manded you ; that ye may live, and that it may be*
 XV. *well with you ; and that ye may prolong your days*
in the land which ye possess. Hear therefore, O
Israel, and observe to do it; that it may be well
with thee, and that ye may increase mightily, as
the Lord God of thy fathers hath promised thee,
in the land that floweth with milk and honey. Such
 were the promises exciting to obedience ; and the
 threatenings deterring from disobedience were an-
 swerable, as every where in their law and story is
 visible.

contrarios-
 que cæteris
 mortalibus
 indidit.
 Tac. 5.
 Cætera in-
 stituta sin-
 istra, fœda
 pravitate
 valuere.

I may also hereto add, that as the laws and rites of this religion were designed only for this people, as they did only agree to their circumstances ; so they were only suited to their inclinations and their capacities ; their inclinations, which were very stubborn and perverse ; their capacities, which were very low and gross, as their own prophets do upon many occasions affirm and complain ; being dissentaneous and repugnant to the common humour and genius of mankind : so experience discovered them to be, when they became more apparent and observable ; *Judæorum mos absurdus, sordidusque* ; (The *Jewish way of life is uncouth and sordid*, was Tacitus his censure ; *Hist. v. 5.*) and, They run counter to all men, was St. Paul's imputation on that people, 1 Thess. ii. 15 ; to which the general conceit of men concerning them did agree ; so little plausible or probable was their way, so liable to dislike and contempt : which argues it unfit to be commended by the God of wisdom to the generality of mankind.

By which and many other like considerations obvious enough may appear, that this dispensation was not (either according to its nature or in its design)

general, or such as respected the main body of mankind, but rather very particular and restrained; designedly restrained to the obligation and use of one place or people, if compared to the world of men, inconsiderably narrow and small; (the fewest of all people God himself says they were.) That, in fine, this constitution had only the nature of a municipal law, imposing burdens and indulging privileges upon one city or territory; not of a common civil sanction, established for the obligation, use, and benefit of the whole commonwealth, or empire subject to the Almighty King.

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Deut. vii. 7.

It is not therefore in reason to be taken for such a revelation, as we argued needful for us, and to be expected from him, *who*, as the Psalmist, as reason, as experience tells us, *is good to all, and whose tender mercies are over all his works*; from him, who is the common Father of all, and, as St. Paul expresseth it, *hath made of one blood* *πᾶν ἔθνος ἀνθρώπων*, *the whole nation and commonwealth of mankind*; from him, who cannot be in affection anywise fond or partial, a respecter of persons or of nations, as St. Paul in the second to the Romans, and St. Peter in the Acts also implies. From him, who is not only the Maker, but, as our apostle also styles him, *the Saviour of all men*; and, as even the Hebrew Wise Man asserts, *careth for all alike*; being *desirous that all men should be saved, and come to the knowledge of the truth*; not willing that any should perish, but that all men should come to repentance. From him, who is not only *φιλεβραῖος*, or *φιλέλλην*, (a lover of Jews, or of Greeks;) but *φιλόανθρωπος*, a lover of men; and *φιλόψυχος*, a lover of souls; who, lastly, is not the God of the Jews only, but of the Gen-

Ps. cxlv. 8.

Acts xvii. 26. The King of the world, the Judge of the earth. Rom. ii.

Acts x. 34.

1 Tim. iv.

10. ii. 4.

Wisd. vi. 7,

11, 23, &c.

2 Pet. iii. 9.

Tit. iii. 4.

Wisd. xi. 26.

Rom. iii. 29.

SERM. *tiles also*, as St. Paul urges this argument; and as
 XV. also the reason of the thing and the voice of nature

lat.
 heet.
 ἰδίῃς τοῖς
 ἑσθίου ἀν-
 θρώποις.

doth declare: from this God, I say, so disposed, so
 related toward us all, so equally concerned in regard
 to us; so impartial in his affection, so unconfined in
 his bounty; we should have reason to expect rather
 no revelation at all, than one so scant, and pinched
 in such narrow bounds; so ill proportioned to the
 glory due to himself, to the need and benefit of man-
 kind. We cannot reasonably imagine that he should
 contract the effects of his goodness, or the manifesta-
 tions of his glory, to so slender a parcel of mankind,

Deut. ix. 4. (no better qualified, no more deserving such special
 regard, than the rest; as himself, to repress their

Matt. v. 45. fond conceits, and probably in way of anticipation, to
 intimate his design of further extending that favour
 in due season to others, who might pretend thereto
 with as much right and reason as themselves, doth
 sometime declare.) That he, who hath freely dis-
 pensed the influences of sun and stars to all alike,
 should cause the light of his heavenly truth to shine,
 as it were, but into one small closet of his spacious
 house; leaving all the rest, so many stately rooms
 thereof, encompassed with shades of ignorance and
 error; that he should pour down the showers of his
 blessings spiritual (otherwise than he hath done those
 natural) upon one only scarce discernible spot of
 ground; letting all the world beside (like a desert
 of sand) lie parched with drought, overspread with
 desolation and barrenness.

This revelation therefore was not in this respect
 sufficient; wanting in its nature and design that
 due condition of generality and amplitude^a. But,

^a Ἐπὶ τῆς παλαιᾶς ὁ νόμος ἔκειτο, ὅτε οὐ πολλὴ ἀρίστης πολιτείας ἡ ἀκρί-

2. Further; As this revelation was particular, so **SERM.**
 was it also partial; as God did not by it speak his **XV.**
 mind to all, so did he not therein speak out all his
 mind. Our apostle to the Hebrews chargeth it with
 blameableness; (εἰ πρώτη ἦν ἄμεμπτος, *if the first cove-* Heb. viii.
nant had been blameless;) with imperfection, with
 weakness, with unprofitableness, (ἀθέτησις μὲν γὰρ γίνε- Heb. vii. 18.
 ται προαγούσης ἐντολῆς διὰ τὸ αὐτῆς ἀσθενὲς καὶ ἀνωφελές· οὐδὲν Gal. iii. 21.
 γὰρ ἐτελείωσεν ὁ νόμος· *There is made an abolition of* οὐ δύν. ζω-
the precedent commandment for the weakness and ποιῶν.
unprofitableness thereof: for the law made nothing Rom. viii. 3.
perfect;) he means all this in degree, and in com-
 parison to what was possible, and in some respects
 needful. Which charge may be easily made good,
 (*a priori*,) considering both the parts thereof which
 direct, and those which excite to practice; together
 with the means and aids enabling and facilitating
 obedience to the laws or rules enjoined; also, (*a po-*
steriori,) if we regard the fruits and effects thereof.
 Surveying first, I say, the directive part, we may ob-
 serve both a redundancy in things circumstantial or
 exterior, and a defectiveness in things substantial
 and interior: there be ritual institutions in vast
 number very nicely described and strongly pressed;
 the observation of times and places, the distinction
 of meats and of habits, (*touch not, taste not, handle* Heb. ix. 9,
not,) corporeal cleansings and purgations; modalities ^{10.}
 of exterior performance in sacrifices and oblations,
 those δικαιώματα σαρκὸς, (justifications of the mere
 flesh, that only concerned the body or outward man,
 and could not perfect the observer's conscience; could

βεια, ὅτε εἰσαγωγή τοῦ θεοῦ ἦν, ὅτε παιδικὰ τὰ παραγγέλματα, ὅτε τὸ
 γάλα, ὅτε ὁ παιδαγωγός, ὅτε ὁ λύχνος, ὅτε ὁ τύπος, καὶ ἡ σκιά. Chrys.
 tom. vi. Or. 44.

SERM. neither satisfy or edify his mind and inward man,)
 XV. we see with extreme punctuality prescribed and enjoined, some of them under very heavy penalties, (of utter extermination and excision.) While moral duties (duties of justice and charity, yea of temperance and sobriety itself) and spiritual devotions (so exceedingly more agreeable to rational nature, and which could not but be much more pleasing to God) were more sparingly delivered in precept, less clearly explained, not so fully urged with rational inducements, nor in a due proportion guarded with rewards. Many things were plainly permitted, or tacitly connived at, (as polygamy and divorce, some kinds of retaliation, cursing, revenge; some degrees of uncharitableness,) which even natural reason dislikes, or condemns. So faulty was that dispensation, as to the part thereof directive of life; and it was no less in that part, which promotes and secures good practice, by applying fit excitements to obedience, and fit restraints from disobedience; rightly managing those great instruments and springs of human activity, natural courage, hope, and fear. Nothing so damps men's alacrity in endeavour, as desperation or diffidence of good success; nothing so quickens it, as a confidence or strong presumption thereof: and how then could they be very earnest in endeavours to please God, who were not assured of (yea, had so much reason to diffide in) God's placability and readiness, upon repentance, to forgive sins wilfully and presumptuously committed, such as no man surely lives altogether free from? The not opening a door of mercy seems discouraging and apt to slacken performance of duty; what was then the shutting it up close, the bolting it with that iron bar, *Cursed is*

he that abides not in all things written in this law to do them ; which at least will exclude assurance, S ERM.
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will quash the hopes of mercy; will consequently Gal. iii. 10.
enervate the sinews of care and industry in serving God. Neither were the rewards of either kind (those that spurred to obedience, those that stopped from disobedience) in measure or in kind such as the reason of things doth afford and require. ^bThey were only temporal, and chiefly corporeal or sensible ; such as belonged to the outward state of this transitory life, which neither can deserve much regard, nor are apt to have great efficacy : for who will in effect, why should any man in reason, highly value the accommodations of this short and uncertain life? who will, who should be, greatly terrified with the inconveniences thereof? whom, probably, would such considerations sufficiently animate to encounter and sustain the perils, the difficulties, the troubles, and the disgraces, to which often the practice of virtue is exposed? whom would they guard from the enchantments of pleasure, profit, and honour, alluring men to sin? the pleasures of sense, how improper an encouragement, how unworthy a recompense are they for the labours and achievements of virtue ! incomparably better surely, more worthy of regard, and more effectual upon man's reason, more apt to produce and to promote real virtue and hearty piety, are the rewards concerning the future state of our immortal soul ; which yet it is a question whether that law doth ever mention ; it is plain it doth not

^b Ὅτε πάντα ἦν σαρκικά, καὶ τοῦ οὐρανοῦ λόγος οὐδεὶς. Chrys. tom. vi. Or. 98.

Περὶ οὐρανίων οὐδέποτε λόγος ἦν, οὐδὲ μελλόντων μνήμη, &c. Chrys. ad Olymp. β'. p. 60. Vid. tom. vii. p. 16.

SERM. clearly propound and apply them. Indeed as to evident discovery concerning the immortality of man's soul, or the future state, so material a point of religion, of so grand moment and influence upon practice, even the Gentile theology, assisted by ancient common tradition, seems to have outgone the Jewish, grounding upon their revealed law; the pagan priests more expressly taught, more frequently inculcated arguments drawn from thence, than the Hebrew prophets; a plain instance and argument of the imperfection of this religion.

I subjoin, God's not thereby (in an ordinary certain way, according to any pact or promise) affording or exhibiting such interior influences of grace upon the minds of men, as, considering the natural frailty, blindness, and impotency of men, appears necessary to render them obedient to the rules of duty, to guide them in the ways of truth and goodness, to free them from error and sin, to shield and animate them against temptation; is a main defect in that religion; apt to breed fear in the onset upon duty, to nourish doubt in the performance thereof, to settle despair upon a fall or defeat. It presented to men's eyes the obligation to duty, the difficulty thereof, the danger of transgressing it, but did not openly represent the means requisite to perform it. And what can be more discouraging or discomfiting, than to see oneself, upon great peril and penalty, obliged to that, which is apparently very hard, or, considering his strength, impossible, no help or support being visible? especially joining the consideration before touched, that no evasion by pardon, no rise by repentance doth appear. Whence we may well infer, that indeed, in effect, this dispensation

was what St. Paul calls it, διακονία θανάτου, and διακονία SERM. XV.
κατακρίσεως, *a ministry of death and condemnation*; 2 Cor. iii. 7, 9.
a subjection to a curse; a killing letter; bearing Gal. iii. 10.
nothing less in the looks and language thereof, than 2 Cor. iii. 6.
certain death and unavoidable ruin; a lying under
insupportable slavery, both to the guilt and punish-
ment of sin. *If thou doest ill, sin lieth at the
door.*

Neither in discoursing thus do we lay any mis- Gen. iv. 7.
beseeming imputation upon God, the author of that
religion; the making so imperfect a revelation no-
wise being disagreeable to his wisdom, his goodness,
or his justice. As for a time he might withhold the
declaration of his mind to all mankind, so might he,
upon the same or like grounds of wise counsel, for-
bear to declare some part thereof to that people: no
special reason appears that could oblige, that might
induce him not to be reserved, as well in part to
these few men, as in whole to those, all the rest of
men; yea, there be good reasons assignable, why the
divine wisdom should be then so sparing of its mind,
why God should only shew his back parts, as it were,
to Moses, and *not let him see his face*; not discover
all of his nature and of his pleasure to him; why
then he should seem to delight in, to lay so much
stress on those carnal and ceremonious observances;
why he should forbear to exact that height of spi-
ritual duty, and not draw men to compliance with
the best motives of pure reason. A dawning of light
perhaps more became that morning of times than a
meridian brightness; that infancy of the world was
not, it may be, ripe for a more deep and perfect in-
struction; that nation, however, to whose state, to
whose disposition and capacity those laws and insti-

SERM. XV. tutions were adapted, was very unfit for the highest and hardest lessons. For a nation it was (as from infallible hands we have it) not wise, or considerate; not grave, or constant; not meek, or pliable; but a very stupid and heady, a very fickle and humourous, a very froward and stubborn generation of men; *They are a nation void of counsel, neither is there any understanding*, was said of them at first by him who delivered their law, or rather by God himself, who enjoined it: and, *I knew that thou art obstinate, and thy neck is an iron sinew, and thy brow brass; I have even from the beginning declared it to thee*, saith the prophet concerning the house of Jacob; alluding, it seems, to those many passages in the law, where they are termed *a stiff-necked people*: incapable thence both of the finest notions and the more rigorous precepts; like children, by reason of the grossness of their apprehension, and the unruliness of their passion, they were not οἰκεῖοι ἀκροαταί, *proper auditors*, of a more pure and accurate discipline; wherefore as such the divine wisdom and goodness was pleased to deal with them; dispensing with the infirmities of their age, condescending to the meanness of their capacities, feeding them with milk, alluring them with petty shows, scaring them with frightful appearances, indulging them innocent trifles, pastimes, and sports; so tempering his ordinances as might best serve to keep them in good humour; to draw and entice them easily unto somewhat good, to curb and restrain them from mischief. Whence St. Paul calls those institutions with good reason *elements*; (*poor and mean elements*, and *elements of the world*; *rudiments of knowledge and discipline*, suited to the capacity

Deut. xxxii.
28.

Jer. iv. 22.

v. 4.

Neh. ix.

Isa. xlviii. 4.

Deut. xxxi.
27.

Exod.

xxxii. 9.

Deut. ix. 6,

13, &c.

Ps. lxxviii.
36, 57.

Gal. iv. 9, 3.

of the first age, and the meanest rank ; such as vulgar and silly people were fit to learn, and able to practise ;) with good reason he calls the law a *pedagogue*, that by instilling into those *νήπιοι*, (those *infants*, or little children, so also he terms them,) some imperfect notions of truth ; by keeping them in some good order, did prepare them for a higher instruction, did predispose them toward a better course of life. Indeed, we may easily conceive that such variety of superficial formalities might well agree to childish and plebeian fancies ; but to men of somewhat elevated minds, and well improved reason ; of sound judgment, and large experience ; who had tasted, and could relish rational entertainments, (and such in some measure and comparatively are men generally born and brought up in countries and places where civility hath obtained ; at least they are capable of being so, fit means being used to render them so,) they must needs be insipid and disgustful. In the study of truth and practice of virtue, there are alluring beauties and sweetnesses ; which it cannot but displease him, who hath seen and felt them, to be diverted from, by an obligation to attend so precisely upon such an abundance of petty, circumstantial, exterior observances ; to be forced, I say, to chew such husks of things, to him, who thereby must neglect so delicious kernels, cannot but be grievous and irksome. Wiser men are never much affected with laborious and tedious pomps ; they are designed always to amuse children, and the common sort. I add, that this dispensation was suited not only to the childish fancy, but to the slavish spirit of that people ; who, having in them little of ingenuity, or willingness freely to do good, would be apt

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Gal. iii. 24.
iv. 9.

SERM. to wax not only dronish and lazy, but sturdy and
XV. insolent, had they not been kept under and inured
 to something of burden and toil. Such all wise men
 know to be the proper course of managing people
 of slavish temper; but toward men of a disposition
 more ingenuous, tractable, and free, such as com-
 monly men civilized and well governed are or may
 become, such a proceeding were incongruous; they
 will either refuse to undergo such unnecessary bur-
 dens, or bear them unwillingly; their obedience will
 be none, or lame, or unkindly and heartless. God
 therefore dealt according to wisdom with the Jews,
 when he imposed such burdens upon their shoulders,
 when he pinched their stiff necks with such yokes,
 when he detained them in such fetters; so they
 were, and so they are truly called by our apostles;
 burdens intolerably heavy; yokes very galling and
 vexatious; fetters very strait and grievous; which
 they reasonably therefore reckon it a very valuable
 privilege and benefit, purchased by our Saviour for
 us, to be loosed from. But such a dispensation could
 not be convenient for the rational nature in com-
 mon, and for perpetuity: it neither becomes God
 himself, who will not without need or profit vex his
 creatures; who cannot be fully satisfied with per-
 formances of so mean a sort; who necessarily doth
 affect services of a more excellent nature and im-
 portance; (those spiritual services of love, reverence,
 and gratitude; of purity, righteousness, and good-
 ness.) It doth not suit man, not being apt to per-
 fect his nature, not being able to satisfy his mind.
 As he, by the improvement and use of his reason,
 will easily discern the small worth of such perform-
 ances, so will he not readily comply with them with-

Acts xv. 10,
 28.
 Gal. v. 1.
 iii. 23.

out regret; but will soon apprehend the matter to SERM.
 be indeed, as St. Paul represents it, that an obliga- XV.
 tion to such rites is *a bond against us*, (ἐξαλείψας τὸ Coloss. ii.
 καθ' ἡμῶν χειρόγραφον τοῖς δόγμασιν, ὃ ἦν ὑπεναντίον ἡμῖν,) ^{14.}
 which in reason he may expect to be wiped out and
cancelled; that a law consisting of such precepts
 hath an *enmity*, or repugnance to his nature; that
 such a dispensation is a *pupillage*, and a *slavery*, Gal. iii. 24.
 which he earnestly must desire to be redeemed and ^{iv. 1, 3, 5,}
 &c.
 mancipated from.

Thus doth this revelation upon many respects,
 grounded on the very intrinsic nature thereof, ap-
 pear partial and imperfect; and consequently not
 such as that which we reasonably may expect from
 the divine wisdom and goodness.

It is true, which some may deem an objection
 against our discourse, but I should rather take for
 a good confirmation thereof, that God did afterward
 annex some labels, as it were, to this deed; that he
 imparted by degrees further manifestations of light
 and grace to that people, by the instructions, and by
 the exemplary practices of prophets and holy men
 raised up among them by his especial instinct and
 order; in a manner and upon occasions extraordi-
 nary. The prophets frequently declared, that God
 had not much delight in those ceremonious observ-
 ances; nor would accept them otherwise than as
 proceeding from good dispositions of mind, and as
 accompanied with practices of moral duty and more
 spiritual piety: that he chiefly did require of them
 hearty reverence toward himself, and submission to
 his will; strict justice, and tender charity toward
 their neighbours; meekness and patience in their
 behaviour; temperance and sobriety in all their con-
 Isa. lxvi. 3.
 i. 11, 12,
 13, &c.
 Mic. vi. 7.
 Hos. vi. 6.
 Psal. l. 8, 9,
 &c. li. 16.
 l. 14. li. 6,
 17.
 Isa. i. 16,
 17. lviii. 6.
 Mic. vi. 8.
 Hos. vi. 6.
 Psal. cxxx.
 3, 4.
 Isa. i. 18.
 lv. 7.
 Ezek. xviii.
 21. xxxiii.
 12.

SERM. versation. By them also he discovered more of his
XV. gracious disposition, and of his merciful intentions
 toward them ; that he would not be extremely rigor-
 ous in punishing the transgressions of his law ; that
 he would not refuse pardon to the most grievous
 sins, not remain irreconcilable toward the most hei-
 nous offenders, upon their sincere repentance and
 amendment of life. By the practices of holy men
 he also shewed, that the rigour of that ceremonious
 law was mitigable ; that in some cases its obligation
 might be relaxed, and its observance dispensed with ;
 that a service more refined and rational was espe-
 cially acceptable to God ; that he loved a purer de-
 votion, a perfecter righteousness, a higher charity
 than such as the letter of their law prescribed. By
 them also he intimated, which their devotions plainly
 infer, that he not only exacted such duties, but was
 ready to afford them his assistance to the perform-
 ing them ; by teaching and admonishing them with-
 in ; enlightening their minds, and inflaming their
 affections ; directing, exciting, and quickening them
 to obedience. Thus did that morning of divine
 knowledge, from the first dawning, by degrees grow
 more lightsome ; yet never arrived to a perfect day-
 light ; the shadows were not quite dispersed ; the
 whole horizon of heavenly truth was not disclosed
 thereby. Even those arbitrary and extraordinary
 dispensations of further instruction are so many good
 arguments, that God did not primarily intend the
 Jewish law for a complete delivery of his mind ; his
 reserving so much to be upon occasion detected, im-
 plied that more still might rest behind ; accordingly,
 as indeed we see, that the future state, and immor-
 tality itself, was not by the prophets fully brought

to light ; that the better covenant, established upon SERM.
better assurances, was not yet revealed ; that all XV.
means requisite for the glory of God, for the good Heb. viii. 6.
of man, were not thoroughly provided for. xi. 13, 40.

Of which conclusion we shall add this one further probation, that Judaism did not serve, in effect, sufficiently to better men's lives ; to qualify a competent number of men for God's favour, or for their own happiness ; by disposing their minds to any tolerable degree of true sanctity, piety, and righteousness acceptable to God, profitable to human society, perfective of man's nature. It is a point that St. Paul in his Epistle to the Romans insisteth much upon, and excellently applies to this same purpose. The Jews were highly conceited of their way, scorning the rest of men as altogether ignorant of God's will, and incapable of his favour ; but St. Paul represses their arrogance, by shewing the difference was not so great, as they imagined, between them and others, not even in those respects ; for that the special revelation, which they were so proud of, had Rom. ii. not produced effects considerably better in them, than the light of reason and the law of nature (means so despicable in their esteem) had brought forth in others ; which charge being made good, it is evident they had no reason to prize their way so much ; or to confide therein, as perfect ; as thoroughly, in the best manner, and in reasonable measure sufficient to qualify them for God's favour, or to bring them into a state of happiness ; yea, it is plain, upon that supposition, in some respects their way had the disadvantage, and made their condition worse than that of other men ; rendering their faults more grievous and inexcusable, more provoking God's displeasure

SERM. XV. against them ; especially seeing, upon the tenor of their religion, they had scarce any better ground to presume of pardon or impunity, than other men had from instincts of nature, from rational conjecture. Now that such a charge upon them is no slander, we need no other probations than what the continual stream of their own histories doth represent concerning their manners ; than the many full and plain testimonies of their own prophets concerning them ; than the extreme punishments by divine justice inflicted upon them ; than the common reputation they have continually had among men, grounded upon experience. What is their history but one continued tragedy, as it were, setting out the various strange rebellions and apostasies of that people, with the miserable consequences proceeding from them ? What do their prophetic writings contain beside pathetic expostulations, severe reproofs, dreadful comminations of judgment upon them, for their prodigious impieties, iniquities, and lewdnesses ; general in extension over all persons, excessive in degree, by no means curable or corrigible ? *Run ye to and fro through the streets of Jerusalem, (Jerusalem, that place of universal concourse, the heart of that nation, the special seat and sanctuary of their religion,) see now and know, and seek in the broad places thereof, if ye can find a man, if there be any that executeth judgment, that seeketh the truth, and I will pardon it,* says Jeremiah, v. 1. *There is a conspiracy of her prophets in the midst thereof, (of Jerusalem,) like a roaring lion ravening the prey ; her priests have violated my law, and have profaned my holy things ; her princes are like wolves ; the people of the land have used oppression and*

Jer. v. 1.

Ezek. xxii.
25—30.

*exercised robbery: and I sought for a man among them, that should make up the hedge, and stand in the gap before me for the land, that I should not destroy it; but I found none, saith Ezekiel: and the rest frequently harp upon the same thing. But these prophets, you will say, lived in unhappy times; so circumstantiated, that no religion could have much prevailed upon men's minds and lives; such as make every religion liable to the same exceptions: well, but Isaiah, one would think, lived in better times; for how many better kings had that nation, that more strictly practised or earnestly promoted piety, than Hezekiah? yet, *A sinful nation, a people laden with iniquities, a seed of evil doers*, were they, it seems, even then; *the land was defiled under the inhabitants thereof; the whole head was sick, and the whole heart faint; from the sole of the foot even to the head there was no soundness in the body of that nation*. Yea, when did that religion flourish in greater vigour and strength, when had it more advantage of exerting its best virtue, than in the peaceful and prosperous times of that great and mighty, that good and zealously pious prince, king David? yet, even in his reign, according to his own observation and testimony, *they were, generally, corrupt, and did abominable works; they all were gone aside, and were altogether become filthy; there was none that did good, no not one*. But we need not urge particular instances, since we have it so often affirmed in gross, that the manners of that people, from first to last, were constantly naught and offensive to God: *The children of Israel, and the children of Judah, saith God himself*^{30.} in Jeremiah, *have only done evil before me from**

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Is. i. 4, 5, 6.

Ps. xiv. 53.

Jer. xxxii.

SERM. *their youth.* And again; *Since the day that your*
 XV. *fathers came forth out of the land of Egypt unto*
 Jer. vii. 25. *this day, I have even sent you all my servants the*
 xvi. 12. *prophets, daily rising up early and sending them;*
 xi. 7. *yet they hearkened not unto me.* The law, although
 by extraordinary persons, in fittest opportunities,
 with utmost vehemence and diligence inculcated
 and urged upon them, proved continually ineffec-
 tual to produce the fruits of piety and righteousness.
 Ezra ix. 7. The same you may see confessed by Ezra; and not
 only acknowledged, but evidently demonstrated by
 Neh. ix. Nehemiah, in a punctual narration, deduced from
 the beginning to his time, in the ninth chapter of
 that book. Again; The heavy calamities by divine
 justice so often inflicted, so long continued upon
 them; and, at last, God's so visible utter dereliction
 and disowning them, do also sufficiently declare what
 their deserts, and what their qualities have been;
 as also what good may ever be expected from them.
 For as God never punishes grievously without a pro-
 portionate cause, so he never quite deserts, but in a
 desperate case, when no competent emendation may
 be expected. He is not wont to lop off the branches,
 but when they grow dead and barren; he never cuts
 down the tree, while there is any hope of fruit. This
 providence therefore toward that people shews, that
 in God's esteem that law is to be laid aside, as an
 instrument grown useless, and unfit for his purposes;
 unfit to serve his glory, to further men's good.

I add; that through all course of times their man-
 ners have not procured in a manner from any men
 any good-will or respect; but indeed the common
 dislike, contempt, and hatred of men: they have al-
 ways (since well known and observed in the world)

been reputed a sort of people not only above all men SERM.
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vain and superstitious, addicted to fond conceits and
fabulous stories, but extremely proud and arrogant,
churlish and sour, ill-natured and false-hearted to-
ward all men; not good or kind, yea not so much
as just or true, toward any but themselves;

(Non monstrare vias eadem nisi sacra colenti;

Quæsitum ad fontem solos deducere verpos;

Juv. Sat. xiv.

*Apud ipsos fides obstinata, misericordia in promp-
tu, sed adversus omnes alios hostile odium.)* Tac. v. p.
621. Vid.
Grot. de
Jure B.
lib. ii. 15. 9.

Such are the obvious characters of them, such were
their humours noted to be; humours not only im-
plausible, but really blameable, deservedly offensive
and odious; being contrary to the common sense, to
the natural ingenuity of man. They have been long,
as we see them now to be, partly for the vanity of
their conceits, partly for the baseness of their minds
and manners, and partly also for the wretchedness
of their condition, the scorn and obloquy of all
nations.

Now the tree, which hath always bore such fruits,
(so unsavoury, so unwholesome,) we have no rea-
son to admire, to esteem excellent and perfect. It
might be good for those times, when men willingly
did feed on acorns, on crabs, on bramble-berries;
but cannot so well serve now, when higher improve-
ments of reason, when philosophy and learning,
by a general influence upon the world, have pre-
pared the palates of men to relish, their stomachs
to digest, more delicious and more wholesome fare.
But,

3. I proceed to shew the third defect, which I at
first observed in this religion, that it was not de-

SERM. signed for perpetual obligation and use. (As it was
 XV. particular in respect of the persons to whom it was directed, whom it obliged; as it was partial and incomplete in its frame, so it was, according to its design, temporary and mutable.) This conclusion we might infer from what hath been said concerning the narrow extent, and concerning the intrinsic imperfection thereof; for supposing a new general and perfect revelation made to mankind, (such as we asserted probably should be,) that would naturally swallow and void those which are particular and imperfect; as comprehending them, it would render them useless; as supplying the defects, correcting the defaults, or removing, paring away the superfluities of them, it would discover them unfit for continuance. As rivers run into the sea, as shadows flee before the sun, so these small and shallow, these dusky and faint revelations would discharge themselves into, would vanish before a complete and universal one. Nothing in nature or in providence that is scant, or defectuous, can be stable and lasting. Thus, I say, is this a conclusion, a consequence of those which preceded; but we have another more convincing sort of evidence to prove it by, (most valid *ad homines*,) even by many pregnant intimations; yea many express remonstrances and predictions, that God did intend in due time to introduce a great change in affairs of this kind; to refine and reform the state of things; to break open those enclosures, and to remove those bars of separation; to enlarge the bounds of his dominion, and to receive all nations into the fold of his most special care and love. In fine, that he would dispense a general full revelation of his mind and will, of his grace and fa-

Mal. iii. 1, 3.
 Heb. ix. 10.

vour to mankind ; such as should not be consistent SERM. XV.
 with that particular and partial law, such as implies
 a disannulling thereof for obligation, and disabling
 it for use. The holy writings of that people ac-
 quaint us, that God intended *to raise up another* Deut. xviii.
Prophet (for extraordinariness and eminency) *like* 15, 18.
to Moses, which should have words by God put Acts iii. 23.
into his mouth ; (new words surely, new revelations
 from God ; for why should he with that solemnity
 be sent to utter stale matters ? whom they should,
 upon peril of their lives and welfare, be particularly
 obliged to hearken (that is, to yield attention and
 obedience) unto. That *the days should come, when* Jer. xxxi.
the Lord would make a new covenant with the 31.
house of Israel, different from that which he made
 with their fathers after their delivery from Egypt ;
 not to be written upon stones, but impressed upon
 men's hearts ; in regard to which passage we may
 with the apostle to the Hebrews well argue ; *If the* Heb. viii.
first had been faultless, and designed to abide in 7, 13.
force, there would have been no place found for
the second ; and that, by speaking of a new cove-
 nant, he antiquated, or declared his intention to an-
 tiquate, the old one.

That time should be, when they should say no Jer. iii. 16.
more, The ark of the covenant of the Lord ; nei-
ther should it come to mind, neither should they
remember it, neither should they visit it ; they are
 the words of the prophet Jeremiah, concerning bet-
 ter times to come ; wherein God *should give them* Jer. iii. 15.
pastors according to his own heart, which should
feed them with knowledge and understanding ; but
 in a way, it is evident, altogether different from the
 Jewish institution ; without any regard to the ark

SERM. of their covenant, that seat and emblem of God's
 XV. especial presence among them.

Psal. cx. 4. That *another priesthood* should infallibly (for God swore so much) be established, not *after the order of Aaron*, but *after the order of Melchizedek*; (not appointed to offer carnal sacrifices, but to impart spiritual benedictions.)

Isa. lxvi. 18, 21. That time should be, *when God would gather all nations and tongues, and they should come and see his glory*; and out of them God would take (that which the Mosaical constitution would not anywise permit) *for priests, and for Levites*.

Ps. cxxxii. 13. Mich. iv. 1, 2, 7, &c. Joel ii. 28. iii. 16. That there should appear a *Zion*; a mountain seated above all mountains, (visible and conspicuous to all the world,) wherein God would place his perpetual residence, the seat of his worship, of his especial presence and influence, to *which all nations should flow*, or willingly resort, to learn God's will, and walk in his ways; which Zion could not be that literal one, long since desolated and disregarded; and which, however, did it stand in repute, could be no convenient receptacle, or resort, for all the world; it is surely another spiritual Zion, or mystical rock, which is prophesied of.

Isa. lxv. 17. lxvi. 22. That God will create new heavens and a new earth; (a thoroughly new world, or new state of things;) such as that *the former should not be remembered, nor come into mind*.

Joel ii. 28. That God would *pour his spirit* of prophecy upon all flesh; (although we see the prophetical spirit hath long deserted the Jewish nation, not so much

Hab. ii. 14. as any pretence thereto remaining.) That the earth should be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea; (Judaism

surely is not this knowledge, which never did, nor SERM. XV.
 is ever likely to fill the earth.) That *from the ris-*
ing of the sun, to the going down thereof, God's Mal. i. 11.
name should be great among the Gentiles; and
in every place incense should be offered unto his
name, and a pure offering. (In every place in-
 cense, acceptable to God, should be offered; not
 only at Jerusalem, to which the Jewish service was
 confined.) That a time was *determined to finish* Dan. ix. 24.
transgression, and make an end of sins; to make
a reconciliation for iniquity, and to introduce ever-
lasting righteousness, to seal up the vision and
prophecy; and to anoint the most Holy.

That God would send him, so much needed and Hag. ii. 7.
desired by all nations, to whom the gathering of Gen. xlix.
the people should be; the Sun of righteousness, Mal. i. 3.
arising with salvation in his wings; the Redeemer Isa. lix. 20.
that should come to Zion; the Messenger of the xlix. 8.
covenant, whom God would give for a covenant of lxi. 1.
the people, to establish the earth, to cause to in-
herit the desolate heritage; the righteous Branch, Jer. xxiii.
to be raised up unto David; to reign and pros- 5, 6.
per, executing judgment and justice in the earth;
whose name should be called, The Lord our Right-
eousness; whom God would anoint to preach good Isa. lxi. 1.
tidings to the meek, and bind up the brokenheart-
ed, &c. that is, in fine, God in due time would send
 the Messias, to enlighten the world with a perfect
 instruction; to reveal God's will, and declare his
 mercy to mankind; to erect a universal spiritual
 kingdom in the minds and hearts of men, reducing
 them to fuller knowledge and to better obedience
 of God. These places of scripture, to which many
 others might be added, do sufficiently evince that

SERM. the Mosaical dispensation was in the design thereof
XV. mutable and transitory ; that God intended, what
Heb. vii. the apostle affirms effected by our Saviour, an abro-
18. gation of the precedent command for its weakness
and unprofitableness. Thus doth God's design con-
cerning the abolition of this religion appear by ver-
bal testimonies ; the same we see also declared by
real effects : his providence hath made good his
word ; he hath not only disobliged men from that
religion, but hath manifestly discountenanced it ;
yea, hath disabled even the most obstinate adher-
ents in opinion and will thereto from the practice
and exercise thereof, according to its primitive rules
and prescriptions. Long is it (for above fifteen hun-
dred years) since they, exiled from their ancient
country, and scattered over the world, have wanted
a place whither to resort, wherein to perform those
most weighty parts of worship and service to God,
oblation of sacrifices, incense and tithes ; their tribes
being confounded, the distinction of priesthood and
people seems taken away ; all the mysterious em-
blems of God's special presence, all the tokens of
God's favour and endearment to them are embez-
zled and quite lost ; nothing is left substantial or
solemn in their religion, which if they would they
could put in practice : all that they retain of their
ancient institution is the observation of some petty
formalities, in matters of less importance ; which
also they have so blended and corrupted with im-
pure mixtures of their own device and forgery, false
and impious opinions, ridiculous and uncouth cere-
monies, idle and absurd stories, that we may justly
suppose genuine Judaism nowhere to be found ; that
it cannot be, nor is indeed any where, practised.

So that what reason shewed fit to be, what God SERM.
XV.
had declared should be, that experience doth attest
to be done; the cessation and abolition of that way
of religion, both as to obligation and use.

So I pass over this second step of my intended Discourse: that no other religion, excepting Christianity, which hath been, or is in being, can reasonably pretend to have proceeded from God, as a universal, complete, and final declaration of his mind and will to mankind. Such as we argued it probable that so wise a God, so just a Lord, so gracious a Father would sometime afford to his poor miserable creatures and children, the sons of Adam.

I have two great steps yet to take: one, that Christianity is in itself a doctrine and law endued with the forementioned conditions; in all respects worthy to come from God, apt to promote his glory, and procure man's benefit. Another, that it *de facto* did proceed from God, was attested to by him, and established by his authority. Which propositions I shall hereafter, by God's grace, endeavour to prove.

And in Jesus Christ, &c.

S E R M O N XVI.

OF THE EXCELLENCY OF THE CHRISTIAN
RELIGION.

1 COR. ii. 6.

We speak wisdom to those which are perfect.

SERM. XVI. **T**HE meaning of these words, upon viewing the context, and weighing the scope of St. Paul's discourse, I take to be in effect this; that however such parts of the Christian doctrine, which St. Paul discovered unto those whom he began to instruct therein, *the milk which he gave the babes in Christ to drink*, especially as propounded, proved, and persuaded in so plain and simple a manner, without advantages of subtile reasoning or elegant language, might seem to persons really ignorant, unskilful, and dull of apprehension, (although much conceited of their own knowledge, wit, and reach,) or to men prepossessed with contrary notions and corrupt affections, to be foolish and unreasonable: yet that the whole doctrine, such as it is in itself, being entirely disclosed unto *perfect men*, that is, to men of an adult and improved understanding, well disposed and void of prejudicate conceits, and cleansed

1 Cor. iii.
1, 2.

from vicious dispositions, would appear *wisdom*; SERM. XVI.
 wisdom, that is, not only exactly true, but highly
 important, and very well suited to the attainment of
 the best ends; even those ends, which it pretendeth
 to bring about, which are manifestly the most excel-
 lent that any knowledge can aim at; the glorifying
 of God, and salvation of man: this I suppose to be
 St. Paul's assertion here; and thereof it is my in-
 tent, by God's assistance, to endeavour now some
 declaration and proof, by representing briefly some
 peculiar excellencies and perfections of our religion;
 which may serve to evince the truth, and evidence
 the wisdom thereof; to make good, that indeed our
 religion well deserveth the privilege it doth claim of
 a divine extraction, that it is not an invention of
 man, but, as St. Paul calleth it, *the wisdom of God*, 1 Cor. ii. 7.
 proceeding from no other author but the God of
 truth and wisdom. It is indeed a common subject,
 and so the best ever should be; it is always profit-
 able, and now seasonable to inculcate it, for the con-
 firmation of ourselves, and conviction of others, in
 this age of wavering and warping toward infidelity;
 wherefore, regarding more the real usefulness of the
 matter than the squeamish fancy of some auditors,
 I shall without scruple propound what my own me-
 ditation hath suggested about it.

1. The first excellency peculiar to the Christian Matt. xi. 27.
 doctrine I observe to be this; that it assigneth a — Neither
 true, proper, and complete character or notion of knoweth
 God; (complete, I mean, not absolutely, but in re- any man
 spect to our condition and capacity;) such a notion the Father
 as agreeth thoroughly with what the best reason save the
 dictateth, the works of nature declare, ancient tra- Son, and he
 dition doth attest, and common experience doth in- to whom-
soever the
Son will
reveal him.

SERM. **XVI.** timate concerning God; such a character as is apt to breed highest love and reverence in men's hearts toward him, to engage them in the strictest practice of duty and obedience to him. It ascribeth unto him all conceivable perfections of nature in the highest degree; it asserteth unto him all his due rights and prerogatives; it commendeth and justifieth to us all his actions and proceedings. For in his essence it representeth him one, eternal, perfectly simple and pure, omnipresent, omniscient, omnipotent, independent, impassible, and immutable; as also, according to his essential disposition of will and natural manner of acting, most absolute and free, most good and benign, most holy and just, most veracious and constant; it acknowledgeth him the maker and upholder of all beings, of what nature and what degree soever; both material and immaterial, visible and invisible; it attributeth to him supreme majesty and authority over all. It informeth us, that he framed this visible world with especial regard to our use and benefit; that he preserveth it with the same gracious respect; that he governeth us with a particular care and providence; viewing all the thoughts, and ordering all the actions of men to good ends, general or particular. It declareth him in his dealings with rational creatures very tender and careful of their good, exceedingly beneficent and merciful toward them; compassionate of their evils, placable for their offences, accessible and inclinable to help them at their entreaty, or in their need; yet nowise fond or indulgent to them; not enduring them to proceed in perverse or wanton courses; but impartial, just, and inflexibly severe toward all iniquity that is pursued; it, in short, describeth

him most amiable in his goodness, most terrible in SERM.
XVI.
his justice, most glorious and venerable in all his
ways of providence: whatever perfections in essence,
state, or practice, either philosophers (by rational col-
lection from innate notions, or from contemplation
of natural effects, or upon observing occurrences in
human affairs) or other institutions from the relics of
primitive tradition, by politic reflection upon things,
from other fountains, or by other means whatever,
have by parts (imperfectly, obscurely, and faintly)
attributed to God, all those our religion, in a full,
clear, and peremptory manner, with advantage be-
yond what I can express, doth ascribe and assert
unto him; not intermixing therewith (as other doc-
trines and institutions may be observed to do) any
thing unworthy of him, or misbecoming him; ad-
joining nothing repugnant to that which natural
light discerneth or approveth; but shewing some-
what beyond what it can descry, concerning God's
incomprehensible nature and manner of subsistence,
his unsearchable counsels of wisdom, his admirable
methods of providence, whereby he hath designed to
commend his goodness to us, and to glorify his jus-
tice; which sorts of truths exceeding man's reach to
devise or comprehend as it becometh God (who so
far transcendeth us in wisdom and knowledge) to
reveal them; so they, wondrously conspiring with
the perfections of God otherwise discernible by us,
do argue or confirm the divinity of the doctrine,
which acquainteth us with them: for a doctrine,
how plausible soever, which should teach us nothing
about God, that by other means could not be found
out, and whose bottom common sense might not
fathom, there were no urgent cause why we should

SERM. derive it from heaven, or why we should not rather
 XVI. deem it the invention of some witty or subtile man.
 But such a doctrine as this, (which as it telleth us nothing about divine things that contradicteth reason, so it informeth us many things which no understanding of man had ever conceived, none can penetrate,) we may justly presume to come from a superior wisdom, we must at least avow it worthy of God; in the contrivances of man's wit or fancy about things of this nature, as in divers instances it hath happened, most probably many flaws and incongruities presently would have appeared; they would have clashed with themselves, or with the dictates of common reason: that, for instance, God should out of his own bosom send down his eternal Son to partake of our nature, and appear in our flesh, that with utmost advantage he might discover God's will and merciful intentions toward us, that he might set before us an exact pattern of good life; that by his obedience and patience he might expiate our sin, and reconcile God to mankind; that he might raise in us a hope of, and lead us in the way to, happiness; this indeed is a mystery, and a depth of wisdom, which we should never have thought of, nor can yet thoroughly sound by thinking, which we better may admire, than we can understand: but neither doth good reason disallow it, nor can disprove it; yea, good reason so far confirmeth it, as it cannot but admit it to import nothing but that which is plainly true and most credible, the immense goodness and justice of God; concerning which nothing ought to seem strange or uncouth to us, since even by the care expressed in matters of ordinary providence divine goodness appeareth so unaccount-

ably vast and high, that upon consideration thereof SERM.
worthily might Job and the Psalmist exclaim; *What* XVI.
is man, that thou shouldest magnify him? and Job vii. 17.
that thou shouldest set thy heart upon him? Lord, Ps. cxliv. 3.
what is man, that thou takest knowledge of him?
or the son of man, that thou makest such account
of him?

Now thus to instil into the minds of men a right
and worthy notion of God, is palpably a great ex-
cellency of any doctrine or religion: for beside that
a true knowledge of God (even barely considered as
in way of theory most perfective of our understand-
ing, it being conversant upon the noblest object of
contemplation) is in itself very desirable; and upon
the same ground error in divine things is no small
evil or defect; both these, such knowledge and such
error respectively, are very considerable, as having
a powerful influence upon action; for according to
men's conceptions about God is their practice, reli-
gious and moral, very much regulated; if men con-
ceive well of God, they will be guided and moved
thereby to render him a worship and an obedience
worthy of him, and acceptable to him; if they are
ignorant of him, or mistake about him, they will
accordingly perform services to him, or pretences of
service, which shall neither become him nor please
him; (God by such misconceptions being trans-
formed into an idol, their religion will become vile
or vain superstition.) And since all men apprehend
the example of God a perfect rule of action, that
they cannot do better than to resemble and imitate
him, such as they conceive God to be, such in good
measure they will endeavour to be themselves, both
in their disposition and demeanour; whence infal-

Isa. lxvi. 3.
I. 13. 14.
Εὐλόγως
ταῖς μὲν
μοχθηραῖς
φάυλας
ἔχουσιν τὰς
περὶ θεοῦ δια-
νοήσεις ἀνάγ-
νη, ταῖς δὲ
σπουδαίαις
ἀρίστας.
Clem.
Strom. vii.
(p. 511.)

SERM. libly the virtues and defects which lie in their no-
XVI. tion will exert and diffuse themselves into their
life.

2. A second great excellency peculiar to the Christian institution is this, that it faithfully informeth us concerning ourselves, concerning our nature, our original, our end, all our state, past, present, and final; points about which otherwise by no reason, no history, no experience, we could be well resolved or satisfied: it teacheth us that we consist of a frail mortal body, taken from the earth and fashioned by God's hand, and of an immortal spirit, derived from heaven, and breathed out of God's mouth; whereby we understand the dignity of our nature and nobleness of our descent, our near alliance and our great obligation to God; and consequently how it concerneth us to behave ourselves, both in regard to God and toward ourselves, in a manner answerable to such a relation, worthy of such an high birth and quality: it sheweth us, that we were originally designed by a voluntary obedience to glorify our Maker, and in so doing to partake of joy and felicity from him; that accordingly we were created in a state agreeable to those purposes, wherein we were fit to serve God, and capable thereby ever to continue happy: but that by our unworthy distrust and wilful disobedience we cast ourselves from thence, and lapsed into this wretched state of inward blindness, error, and disorder, of outward frailty, sorrow, and trouble: it acquainteth us further, how being thus estranged from God, and exposed to the effects of his just displeasure, we are yet again, by his exceeding mercy and favour, put into a capacity of recovering ourselves, of being re-

instated in a condition happy far beyond that from SERM.
XVI.
which we fell, by returning unto God, and complying with his will declared unto us; as also how continuing obstinately in our degeneracy and disobedience we shall assuredly plunge ourselves deeper into an abyss of endless misery: it fully representeth unto us, what shall be our future state and final doom, how it shall be suited to our demeanours and deserts in this life; what a strict trial, what a severe judgment, all our actions (even our passant words and our secret thoughts) must hereafter undergo; and how, upon the result, we shall become either exceedingly happy or extremely miserable for ever. It is indeed this doctrine only, which fully resolveth us about this weighty inquiry, which hath so much perplexed all men, and with so much irresolution exercised philosophers, wherein the final end and happiness of man consisteth, and what is the way of attaining it; assuring us, that it consisteth not in any of these transitory things, nor in a confluence of them all, but in the favour and the enjoyment of God, with the blessings flowing thence; that this happiness is only by a sincere and constant obedience to God's holy laws, or by the practice of such a piety and such a virtue which this doctrine prescribeth, to be obtained. These most important truths, so useful both for the satisfaction of our minds, and the direction of our lives, this doctrine unfoldeth: I call them truths, and that really they are such even their harmony and consistence between themselves, their consonancy with inferences from all sorts of principles, which we can apply for learning of truth, with what about these matters reason collecteth, tradition reporteth, experience

SERM. doth imply, may well persuade us: for that man
XVI. was first made and constituted in a happy state; that he was for his misbehaviour detruded thence; that hence he is become so very prone to vice, and so much subject to pain; that our souls do abide after death; that after this life there shall be a reckoning and judgment, according to which good men (who here are often much afflicted) shall be rewarded with joy, and bad men (who commonly prosper here) shall be requited with pain, the wisest men, upon these grounds, always have surmised; and their rational conjectures our religion with a positive and express assertion doth establish. So great a light doth it afford (which is no small perfection thereof) to the knowledge of ourselves and our chief concernments, the objects, next to God and what concerneth him, best deserving our inquiry and information.

As ye have
 received of
 us how ye
 ought to
 walk and
 to please
 God.

1 Thess. iv.
 1.

3. It is a peculiar excellency of our religion, that it prescribeth an accurate rule of life, most congruous to reason, and suitable to our nature; most conducive to our welfare and our content; most apt to procure each man's private good, and to promote the public benefit of all; by the strict observance whereof we shall do what is worthy of ourselves and most becoming us; yea, shall advance our nature above itself into a resemblance of the divine nature; we shall do God right, and obtain his favour; we shall oblige and benefit men, acquiring withal good-will and good respect from them; we shall purchase to ourselves all the conveniences of a sober life, and all the comforts of a good conscience. For, if we first examine the precepts directive of our practice in relation to God, what can be more just, or comely, or

pleasant, or beneficial to us, than are those duties of SERM.
XVI.
piety, which our religion doth enjoin? What can be more fit, than that we should most highly esteem and honour him, who is most excellent? that we should bear most hearty affection to him, who is in himself most good, and most beneficial to us? that we should have a most awful dread of him, who is so infinitely powerful, holy, and just? that we should be very grateful unto him from whom we have received our being, with all the comforts and conveniences thereof? that we should entirely trust and hope in him, who can do what he will, and will do whatever in reason we can expect from his goodness, and can never fail to perform what he hath promised? that we should render all obedience and observance to him, whose children, whose servants, whose subjects we are born; by whose protection and provision we enjoy our life and livelihood? Can there be a higher privilege than liberty of access, with assurance of being favourably received in our needs, to him, who is thoroughly able to supply them? Can we desire upon easier terms to receive benefits, than by acknowledging our wants, and asking for them? Can there be required a more gentle satisfaction from us for our offences, than confession of them, accompanied with repentance and effectual resolution to amend? Is it not, in fine, most equal and fair, that we should be obliged to promote his glory, who hath obliged himself to further our good? The practice of such a piety as it is apparently λογικὴ λατρεία, *a reasonable service*, so it cannot but produce excellent fruits of advantage to ourselves, a joyful peace of conscience, and a comfortable hope, a freedom from all supersti-

SERM. tious terrors and scruples, from all tormenting cares
 XVI. and anxieties; it cannot but draw down from God's
 bountiful hands showers of blessings upon our heads,
 and of joys into our hearts; whence our obligation
 to these duties is not only reasonable, but very de-
 sirable.

Consider we next the precepts by which our reli-
 gion doth regulate our deportment toward our neigh-
 bours and brethren; (so it styleth all men, intimat-
 ing thence the duties it requireth us to perform to-
 ward them;) and what directions in that kind can
 be imagined comparably so good, so useful, as those
 which the gospel affordeth? An honest pagan his-
 torian saith of the Christian profession, that *nil nisi*
justum suadet et lene; the which is a true, though
 not full character thereof. It enjoineth us, that we
 should sincerely and tenderly love one another,
 should earnestly desire and delight in each other's
 good, should heartily sympathise with all the evils
 and sorrows of our brethren, should be ready to
 yield them all the help and comfort we are able,
 being willing to part with our substance, our ease,
 our pleasure, for their benefit or succour; not con-
 fining this our charity to any sorts of men, particu-
 larly related or affected toward us, but, in conform-
 ity to our heavenly Father's boundless goodness, ex-
 tending it to all; that we should mutually bear one
 another's burdens, and bear with one another's in-
 firmities, mildly resent and freely remit all injuries,
 all discourtesies done unto us; retaining no grudge
 in our hearts, executing no revenge, but requiting
 them with good wishes and good deeds. It charg-
 eth us to be quiet and orderly in our stations, dili-
 gent in our callings, veracious in our words, upright

Am. Marc.
 l. 22.

in our dealings, observant of our relations, obedient SERM.
and respectful toward our superiors, meek and XVI.
gentle to our inferiors; modest and lowly, ingenuous and compliant in our conversation, candid and benign in our censures, innocent and inoffensive, yea courteous and obliging, in all our behaviour toward all persons. It commandeth us to root out of our hearts all spite and rancour, all envy and malignity, all pride and haughtiness, all evil suspicion and jealousy; to restrain our tongue from all slander, all detraction, all reviling, all bitter and harsh language; to banish from our practice whatever may injure, may hurt, may needlessly vex or trouble our neighbour. It engageth us to prefer the public good before any private convenience, before our own opinion or humour, our credit or fame, our profit or advantage, our ease or pleasure; rather discarding a less good from ourselves, than depriving others of a greater. Now who can number or estimate the benefits that spring from the practice of these duties, either to the man that observeth them, or to all men in common? "O divinest Christian charity, what tongue can worthily describe thy most heavenly beauty, thy incomparable sweetness, thy more than royal clemency and bounty! how nobly dost thou enlarge our minds beyond the narrow sphere of self and private regard into an universal care and complacency, making every man ourself, and all concerns to be ours! how dost thou entitle us unto, how dost thou invest us in, all the goods imaginable; dost enrich us with the wealth, dost prefer

¹ Τοιαύτη γὰρ ἡ τῆς ἀγάπης δύναμις τοὺς οὐκ ἀπολαυσάντας τῶν ἀπολαυσάτων ἐξίσης ποιεῖ χαίρειν, κοινὰ τὰ τῶν πλησίον ἀγαθὰ πείθουσα νομίζειν. Chrys. Ἀνθρ. 19.

SERM. us with the honour, dost adorn us with the wisdom
XVI. and the virtue, dost bless us with all prosperity of
the world, whilst all our neighbour's good, by our
rejoicing therein, becometh our own ! how dost thou
raise a man above the reach of all mischiefs and dis-
asters, of all troubles and griefs, since nothing can
disturb or discompose that soul, wherein thou dost
constantly reside and absolutely reign ! how easily
dost thou, without pain or hazard, without drawing
blood or striking stroke, render him that enjoyeth
thee an absolute conqueror over all his foes, trium-
phant over all injuries without, and all passions
within ; for that he can have no enemy, who will be
a friend to all, and nothing is able to cross him, who
is disposed to take every thing well ! how sociable,
how secure, how pleasant a life might we lead under
thy kindly governance ! what numberless sorrows
and troubles, fears and suspicions, cares and distrac-
tions of mind at home, what tumults and tragedies
abroad, might be prevented, if men would but
hearken to thy mild suggestions ! what a paradise
would this world then become, in comparison to
what it now is, where thy good precepts and advices
being neglected, uncharitable passions and unjust
desires are predominant ! how excellent then is that
doctrine, which brought thee down from heaven,
and, would but men embrace thee, the peace and
joy of heaven with thee !

If we further survey the laws and directions which
our religion prescribeth concerning the particular
management of our souls and bodies in their re-
spective actions and enjoyments, we shall also find,
that nothing could be devised more worthy of us,
more agreeable to reason, more productive of our

welfare and our content. It obligeth us to preserve SERM.
XVI.
unto our reason its natural prerogative, or due empire in our souls, and over our bodies, not to suffer the brutish part to usurp and domineer over us; that we be not swayed down by this earthy lump, not enslaved to bodily temper, not transported with tumultuary humours, not deluded by vain fancy; that neither inward propensions nor impressions from without be able to seduce us to that which is unworthy of us, or mischievous to us. It enjoineth us to have sober and moderate thoughts concerning ourselves, suitable to our total dependence upon God, to our natural meanness and weakness, to our sinful inclinations, to the guilt we have contracted in our lives; that therefore we be not puffed up with self-conceit, or vain confidence in ourselves, or in any thing about us; (any wealth, honour, or prosperity.) It directeth us also to compose our minds into a calm, serene, and cheerful state; that we be not easily distempered with anger, or distracted with care, or overborne with grief, or disturbed with any accident befalling us; but that we be content in every condition, and entertain patiently all events, yea, accept joyfully from God's hand whatever he reacheth to us. It commandeth us to restrain our appetites, to be temperate in all our enjoyments, to abstain from all irregular pleasures, which are base in kind, or excessive in degree; which may corrupt our minds, or impair our health, or endamage our estate, or stain our good name, or prejudice our peace or repose: it doth not prohibit us the use of any creature, whence we may receive innocent convenience or delight, but indulgeth us a prudent and sober use of them all, with the sense of God's goodness, and thankfulness to him,

SERM. who bestoweth them upon us. Our religion also
 XVI. further ordereth us (so far as our necessary occasions
 or duties permit) to sequester and elevate our minds
 from these low and transitory things, from the fading
 glories, the unstable possessions, the vanishing
 delights of this world; things indeed unworthy the
 attention, unworthy the affection of an heaven-born
 and immortal spirit; that we should fix our thoughts,
 our desires, our endeavours upon objects most worthy
 of them, objects high and heavenly, pure and
 spiritual, infinitely stable and durable; *not to love
 the world, and the things therein; to be careful for
 nothing, but to cast all our care upon God's provi-
 dence; not to labour for the meat that perisheth,
 not to trust in uncertain riches; to have our trea-
 sure, our heart, our hope, our conversation above in
 heaven. Such directions our religion prescribeth;
 by compliance with which, if man be at all capable
 of being happy, assuredly his happiness must be at-
 tained; for that no present enjoyment can render a
 man happy, all experience proclaimeth; the restless
 motions we continually see, the woful complaints we
 daily hear, do manifestly demonstrate.*

Vid. Grot.
 de Veritate,
 iv. 12.
 Phil. iv. 8.

And who seeth not the great benefits and the
 goodly fruits accruing from observance of these laws
 and rules? Who discerneth not the admirable con-
 sent of all these particular injunctions in our religion
 with that general one, *Whatever things are true,
 whatever things are just, whatever things are ho-
 nest, whatever things are pure, whatever things
 are lovely, whatever things are of good report, if
 there be any virtue, or any praise, that we should
 mind such things, and practise them?* Such, and far
 more excellent than I am able to describe, is the rule

of Christian practice ; a rule in perfection, in beauty, in efficacy far surpassing all other rules ; productive of a goodness more complete, more lovely, more sprightly than any other doctrine or institution hath been or can be able to bring forth ; much exceeding, not only *the righteousness of blind Pharisees*, but all the virtue of the most sage^b philosophers ; somewhat in part concurrent therewith philosophy hath descried and delivered ; (it is no wonder it should, since all of it is so plainly consonant to reason ;) yet what philosophy hath in this kind afforded, is in truth, if compared with what our religion teacheth, exceedingly meagre, languid, and flat : two words here, *Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and thy neighbour as thyself*, do signify more, do contain in them more sense and savour, to the judgment and relish of a well disposed mind, than the Ethics of Aristotle, the Offices of Cicero, the Precepts and Dissertations of Epictetus, the many other volumes of philosophical morality all put together ; in matter our rule is far more rich and full, more sweet and sapid than theirs ; in force and efficacy it doth also (as we shall hereafter see) far excel them^c.

^b Τί ἂν τις εἴποι τῶν προσταγμάτων τὴν φιλοσοφίαν, τῶν οὐρανίων νόμων τὴν ἀρετὴν, τῆς ἀγγελικῆς πολιτείας τὴν εὐταξίαν ; τοιοῦτον γὰρ ἡμῖν εἰσπρήσατο βίον, τοιαύτους ἡμῖν ἔθηκε νόμους, τοιαύτην κατεστήσατο πολιτείαν, ὡς τοὺς τούτοις χρωμένους ἀγγέλους εὐθέως γίνεσθαι, καὶ ὁμοίους θεῷ κατὰ τὴν δύναμιν τὴν ἡμετέραν. Chrys. in Joh. i. 14.

Ὅσα παρὰ πᾶσι καλῶς εἴρηται, Χριστιανῶν ἐστι. Just. M. Apoll. 1.

Vid. Lud. Viv. in Aug. de Civ. D. x. 4.

Quæ disputationes, quæ literæ quorumlibet philosophorum, quæ leges quarumlibet civitatum duobus præceptis, ex quibus Christus dicit totam legem prophetasque pendere, ullo modo sint comparandæ ? Aug. Epist. iii. ad Volus. Vid. Chrys. Ἀνδρ. 19.

^c Δηλοῦν ἐθέλει τοῦτομα τὸ Χριστιανοῦ, ἄνδρα διὰ τῆς τοῦ Χριστοῦ γνώσεως

SERM.
XVI.

4. We may hereto annex this consideration, which may pass for another peculiar advantage of our religion, that as it delivereth so excellent and perfect a rule of life, so it delivereth it unto us pure from any allay embasing, free of any clog encumbering it; for that it chiefly, and in a manner only requireth of us a rational and spiritual service, consisting in performance of substantial duties, plainly necessary or profitable; not withdrawing us from the practice of solid piety and virtue by obligations to a tedious observance of many external rites; not spending the vigour of our minds upon superficial formalities, (or *busy scrupulosities*, as Tertullian termeth them^d,) such as serve only to amuse childish fancies, or to depress slavish spirits. It supposeth us men, men of good understanding and ingenuous disposition, and dealeth with us as such; and much more such it rendereth us, if we comply therewith. The ritual observances it enjoineth are as few in number, in nature simple and easy to perform, so evidently reasonable, very decent, and very useful; apt to instruct us in, able to excite us unto, the practice of most

καὶ διδασκαλίας, σωφροσύνη καὶ δικαιοσύνη, καρτερία τε βίου καὶ ἀρετῆς ἀνδρίας, εὐσεβείας τε ὁμολογία ἐνδὸς καὶ μόνου τοῦ ἐπὶ πάντων θεοῦ διαπρέπειν. Euseb. Hist. i. 4.

^d Negotiosæ scrupulositates. *Tertull. in Marc.* 2.

Quædam pauca eademque factu facillima, et intellectu augustissima, et observatione castissima Dominus, et apostolica tradidit disciplina, sicuti est baptismi sacramentum, et celebratio corporis et sanguinis Domini. *Aug. de Doct. Chr.* iii. 9.

Dominus noster Jesus Christus leni jugo nos subdidit, et sarcinæ levi; unde sacramentis numero paucissimis, significatione præstantissimis societatem novi populi colligavit; sicuti est baptismus Trinitatis nomine consecratus, communicatio corporis et sanguinis ipsius, et siquid aliud in scripturis canonicis commendatur. *Aug. Ep.* 118. *ad Januar.*

wholesome duties: which consideration sheweth this doctrine to be complete, suitable to the most adult age and best constitution, to the most ripe and improved capacities of man. But further, SERM.
XVI.

5. Our religion hath also this especial advantage, that it setteth before us a living copy and visible standard of good practice; wherein we have all its precepts compacted as it were into one body, and at once exposed to our view. Example yieldeth the most compendious instruction, together with the most efficacious incitement to action; but never was there or could be any example in either respect comparable to this; never was any so thoroughly perfect in itself, so purposely designed, so fitly accommodated for imitation, or so forcibly engaging thereto, as this: there is not one flaw, one spot, one false or uneven stroke in all this copy, so that we are secure from doing amiss in transcribing any part thereof; it was intended to conduct us through all the parts of duty, especially those which are most high and difficult to our frail and decayed nature, general charity, self-denial, humility, and patience: it was admirably squared for the imitation of all men, the Person in whom it shined being, as it were, indefinite, and unrestrained to any single condition; he being in right and power superior to the greatest princes, though according to choice and in outward parts inferior to the meanest subjects; having under his command the largest wealth, although enjoying none; being able readily to procure to himself what glory and respect he pleased, yet pleasing to pass obscure and disregarded; so teaching those of highest rank to be sober and condescensive, those of lowest degree to be patient and content in their respective

Longum
est iter per
præcepta,
breve et
efficax per
exempla.
Sen.

SERM. states ; teaching all men not to rest in, nor much to
XVI. regard, these present things, but singly in all their doings above all things to seek God's honour, with main resolution and diligence to prosecute his service : and as to all degrees, so to all capacities, was his practice suited, being neither austere nor remiss, formal nor singular, careless nor boisterous ; but in a moderate, even, and uniform course so tempered, that persons of all callings and all complexions easily might follow him in the practice of all true righteousness, in the performance of all substantial duties toward God and toward man. It is also an example attended with the greatest obligations and inducements to follow it ; the great excellency and high dignity of the Person, being the most holy, firstborn Son of God, heir of eternal majesty ; our manifold relations to him, being our Lord and Master, our best Friend, our most gracious Redeemer ; the many inestimable benefits received by us from him, all that redemption from extreme misery, and capacity of perfect happiness do import, are so many potent arguments engaging us to imitate him.

6. Further, our religion doth not only thus truly and fully acquaint us with our duty ; but, which is another peculiar virtue thereof, it buildeth our duty upon most solid grounds, presseth it with most valid inducements, draweth it from the best principles, and driveth it to the best ends : no philosophy can in any measure represent virtue so truly estimable and eligible, can assign so evident and cogent reason why we should embrace it and strictly adhere thereto, can so well discover or describe the excellent fruits that grow upon it, as doth this philosophy of ours, as the ancient Fathers are wont to call it.

Other philosophies have indeed highly commended SERM.
XVI.
virtue, and vehemently exhorted thereto; but the grounds on which they laid its praise are very sandy, the arguments by which they enforced its practice are very feeble, the principles from which they deduced it, and the ends which they propounded thereto, are very poor and mean, if we discuss them; at least if they be compared with ours: virtue, said they, is a thing of itself, upon account of its own native beauty and worth, abstracting from all reward or profit springing from it, very admirable and desirable; it is beside a very pleasant and very useful thing, begetting tranquillity and satisfaction of mind; yielding health, safety, reputation, pleasure, quiet, and other manifold conveniences of life: but can so magnificent and so massy a fabric of commendation stand firm upon such foundations as these? are these principles of love and admiration toward we know not what, these ends of temporal advantage and convenience, so noble or worthy? are the accommodations of this short and uncertain life a proper encouragement or a just recompense for the laborious achievements of true virtue? are these weapons sufficient to fortify men, or these discourses able to animate them in resisting the temptations which avert from virtue, or avoiding the enchantments which allure to vice? Will men, I say, readily, for the sake of an imaginary or insensible thing, (a goodly name only, for all they see,) which representeth no more of benefit attending it, cross the bent of their natural inclinations, forfeit their present ease, reject certain fruitions of pleasure, wave occasions of getting to themselves profit, honour, and power, goods so manifestly substantial and grateful

SERM. to nature? will they undergo contentedly the difficulties, encounter the dangers, sustain the pains, the disgraces, the losses commonly incident to virtue? **XVI.**

No surely, when it cometh to earnest trial, it will hardly seem reason or wisdom so to do. But the Christian doctrine, as it compriseth, and in an inferior order urgeth also, such grounds and arguments, so it doth exhibit others far more solid and forcible: it commendeth goodness to us, not only as agreeable to man's imperfect and fallible reason, but as conformable to the perfect goodness of God, as the dictate of his infallible wisdom, as the resolution of his most holy will; as enjoined by his unquestionable authority, as our indispensable duty, and only way to happiness: the principles, from which it willeth us to act, are love, reverence, and gratitude to God, hearty good-will toward men, and a sober regard to our own true welfare; the ends which it prescribeth are God's honour, public edification, and the salvation of our own souls: it stirreth us to good practice, by minding us, that we shall thereby resemble the Supreme Goodness, shall express our gratitude toward that great Benefactor, unto whom we owe all that we have; shall discharge our duty, pay due honour, perform faithful service to our Almighty Lord and King; that we shall thereby surely decline the wrath and displeasure of God, shall surely obtain his favour and mercy, with all sorts of blessings needful or profitable for us; that we shall not only avoid regrets and terrors of conscience here, but escape endless miseries and torments; we shall not only procure present comfort and peace of mind, but shall acquire crowns of everlasting glory and bliss. These surely are the truest and firmest grounds

upon which a right estimation of virtue can subsist; **SERM. XVI.**
 these are motives incomparably most effectual to the
 embracing thereof; these are the purest fountains
 whence it can spring, the noblest marks whither it
 can aim; a virtue so grounded, so reared, is certainly
 most sound and genuine, most firm and stable, most
 infinitely beneficial. But further,

7. It is a peculiar advantage of Christianity, (which
 no other law or doctrine so much as pretendeth to,)
 that it not only clearly teacheth us and strongly
 persuadeth us to so excellent a way of life, but pro-
 videth also sufficient help and ability to practise it;
 without which (such is the frailty of our nature, as
 experience proveth, that) all instruction, all exhorta-
 tion, all encouragement, would avail little. Other
 laws, for want of this, are in effect *ministries of* 2 Cor. iii.
condemnation, racks of conscience, parents of guilt 7, 9.
 and of regret; reading hard lessons, but not assist- Rom. v. 20.
 ing to do after them; imposing heavy burdens, but Aug. de
 not enabling to bear them: our law is not such; it Spir. et lit.
 is not *a dead letter*, but hath a *quickeningspirit* Τοῖς εὖ βιοῦν
 accompanying it; it not only soundeth through the ἰσχυροῖς
 ear, but stampeth itself upon the heart of him that πρὸς τὴν λα-
 sincerely doth embrace it; it always carrieth with it οὐκ ἐκ σαρκεῖαν
 a sure guide to all good, and a safe guard from all ἰμπερίαν.
 evil: if our mind be doubtful or dark, it directeth Clem. Alex.
 us to a faithful oracle, where we may receive coun- Strom. vi.
 sel and information: if our passions are unruly, if p. 523.
 our appetites are outrageous, if temptations be vio-
 lent, and threaten to overbear us, it leadeth us to
 a full magazine, whence we may furnish ourselves
 with all manner of arms to withstand and subdue
 them: if our condition, in respect to all other means,
 be disconsolate or desperate, it sendeth us to a place,

SERM. where we shall not fail of refreshment and relief; it
XVI. offereth, upon our earnest seeking and asking, the wisdom and strength of God himself for our direction, our aid, our support and comfort, in all exigencies. To them, who with due fervency and constancy *ask it*, God hath in the gospel promised to
Luke xi. 13. *grant his holy Spirit*, to guide them in their ways, to admonish them of their duty, to strengthen them in obedience, to guard them from surprises and assaults of temptation, to sustain them, and cheer them in afflictions. This advantage, as it is proper to our religion, so it is exceedingly considerable; for what would the most perfect rule or way signify, without as well a power to observe it, as a light to discern it? and how can man, (so ignorant, so impotent, so inconstant a creature; so easily deluded by false appearances, and transported with disorderly passions; so easily shaken and unsettled by any small assault,) either alone without some guidance perceive, or by himself without some assistance prosecute, what is good for him, especially in cases of intricacy and difficulty? how should he who hath frequent experience of his own weakness, not be utterly disheartened and cast into despair either of standing fast in a good state, or of recovering himself from a bad one; of rescuing himself from any vicious inclination, or attaining any virtuous habit, if he did not apprehend such a friendly power vigilantly guarding him, ready upon all occasions to succour and abet him? this consideration it is, which only can nourish our hope, can excite our courage, can quicken and support our endeavour in religious practice, by assuring us, that there is no duty so hard, which by the grace vouchsafed us we may not achieve; that.

there is no enemy so mighty, which by the help SERM. XVI.
afforded us we cannot master; so that, although we
find ourselves *able to do nothing of ourselves*, yet Phil. iv. 13.
we can do all things by Christ that strengtheneth
us.

8. Another peculiar excellency of our religion is this, that it alone can appease and satisfy a man's conscience, breeding therein a well-grounded hope, and a solid comfort; healing the wounds of bitter remorse and anxious fear, which the sense of guilt doth inflict: *There is no man*, as king Solomon 2 Chron. vi. 36. said, and all men know, *who sinneth not*; who doth Eccles. vii. 20. not find himself in thought, word, and deed, frequently thwarting the dictates of reason, violating the laws of piety and justice, transgressing the bounds of sobriety; who consequently doth not in his own judgment condemn himself of disorder, and of offence committed against the world's great Lawgiver and Governor, the just patron of right and goodness; who thence doth not deem himself obnoxious to God's wrath, and is not fearful of deserved punishment from him: which fear must Pœna potest demi, culpa perennis erit. Ovid. needs be fostered and augmented by considering, that as past facts are irrevocable, so guilt is indelible, and punishment, except by the voluntary remission of him that is offended, inevitable; as also that there are no visible means of removing or abating such guilt by any reparation or amends that he can make, who is more apt to accumulate new offences, than able to compensate for what he hath committed: now in such a case, some man indeed Wisd. xii. 19. may frame to himself hopes of mercy; may from the experience of God's forbearance to punish, and continuance of his bounty to sinners, presume that God

SERM. is placable, and will not be rigorous in his proceed-
 XVI. ings with him ; may hopefully guess, that in favour
 God will admit his endeavours at repentance, will
 accept the compensations he offereth in lieu of his
 duty, may suffer his guilt to be atoned by the sacri-
 fices he presenteth ; yet can no man upon such pre-
 sumptions ground a full confidence that he shall
 find mercy ; he cannot however be satisfied upon
 what terms mercy will be granted, in what manner
 it shall be dispensed, or how far it shall extend ;
 God never having exhibited any express declara-
 tions or promises to those purposes ; no man there-
 fore can otherwise than suspect himself to be in a
 bad state, or esteem himself secure from the pur-
 suits of justice and wrath ; as he knoweth that *sin*
lieth at the door, so he cannot know but that
 vengeance may lie near it ; hence common reason,
 as well as the Jewish law, is a *ministry of death*,
 and a *killing letter*, carrying nothing in the looks
 or language thereof, but death and ruin ; hence is a
 man (if at least he be not besotted into a careless
 stupidity) shut up in an irksome bondage of spirit,
 under the grievous tyranny, if not of utter despair,
 yet of restless suspicion about his condition ; which
 as it quencheth in his mind all steady peace and
 joy, so it dampeth his courage and alacrity, it ener-
 vateth his care and industry to do well, he doubting
 what success and what acceptance his undertakings
 may find ; it also cooleth in him good affections to-
 wards God, whom that he hath offended he know-
 eth, and questioneth whether he can be able to re-
 concile.

From this unhappy plight our religion thoroughly
 doth rescue us, assuring us, that God Almighty is

is not only reconcilable, but desirous, upon good SERM. XVI. terms, to become our friend, himself most frankly proposing overtures of grace, and soliciting us to close with them; it upon our compliance tendereth, under God's own hand and seal, a full discharge of all guilts and debts, however contracted; it receiveth a man into perfect favour and friendship, if he doth not himself wilfully reject them, or resolve to continue at distance, in estrangement and enmity toward God. It proclaimeth, that if we be careful to amend, God will not be *extreme to mark what we do amiss*; that iniquity, if we do not incorrigibly Psal. cxxx. 3, 4 affect and cherish it, *shall not be our ruin*; that al- Ezek. xviii. 30. though by our infirmity we fall often, yet by our repentance we may rise again, and by our sincerity shall stand upright; that our endeavours to serve and please God (although imperfect and defective, if serious and sincere) will be accepted by him: this is the tenor of that great covenant between heaven and earth, which the Son of God did procure by his intercession, did purchase by his merits of wonderful obedience and patience, did ratify and seal by his blood; did publish to mankind, did confirm by miraculous works, did solemnize by holy institutions, doth by the evangelical ministry continually recommend to all men; so that we can nowise doubt of its full accomplishment on God's part, if we be not deficient on ours: so to our inestimable benefit and unspeakable comfort doth our religion ease their conscience, and encourage them in the practice of their duty, who do sincerely embrace it, and firmly adhere thereto.

9. The last advantage which I shall mention of I Cor. i. 17. ii. 2. this doctrine is this; that it propoundeth and as- Ἀπλῶς ἰ

SERM. serteth itself in a manner very convincing and satisfactory : it propoundeth itself in a style and garb of speech, as accommodate to the general capacity of its hearers, so proper to the authority which it claimeth, becoming the majesty and sincerity of divine truth ; it expresseth itself plainly and simply, without any affectation or artifice, without ostentation of wit or eloquence, such as men study to insinuate and impress their devices by : ^e it also speaketh with an imperious and awful confidence, such as argueth the speaker satisfied both of his own wisdom and authority ; that he doubteth not of what he saith himself, that he knoweth his hearers obliged to believe him ; its words are not like the words of a wise man, who is wary and careful that he slip not into mistake, (interposing therefore now and then his may-be's and perchances,) nor like the words of a learned scribe, grounded on semblances of reason, and backed with testimonies ; nor as the words of a crafty sophister, who by long circuits, subtile fetches, and sly trains of discourse doth inveigle men to his opinion ; but like the words of a king, carrying with them authority and power uncontrollable, commanding forthwith attention, assent, and obedience ; ^f this you are to believe, this you are to do, upon pain of our high displeasure, at

μῦθος τῆς ἀληθείας
Iohn. Eurip.
Vid. Orig.
in Cels. lib.
6. Lact. iii.
1.
Matt. vii.
29.

Eccles. viii.
4.

^e Οὐ γὰρ κτύπον ῥημάτων, οὐδὲ λέξεως κόμπον, οὐδὲ ὀνομάτων καὶ ῥημάτων κόσμον καὶ συνθήκην ὑπόμεθα περιττὴν καὶ ἀνόητον (πόρρω γὰρ ταῦτα τῆς φιλοσοφίας ἀπάσης) ἀλλὰ ἰσχὺν ἁμαχὸν καὶ θείαν, καὶ δογμάτων ὀρθῶν ἀμήχανον δύναμιν, καὶ μυρίων χορηγίαν ἀγαθῶν. Chrys. Proem. in Joh.

^f Quæ quidem tradita sunt breviter, ac nude ; nec enim decebat aliter, ut cum Deus ad hominem loqueretur, argumentis assereret suas voces, tanquam fides ei non haberetur, sed ut oportuit est locutus, quasi rerum omnium maximus iudex, cujus non est argumentari, sed pronunciare verum. Lact. iii. 1.

your utmost peril be it ; your life, your salvation dependeth thereon : such is the style and tenor thereof, plainly such as becometh the sovereign Lord of all to use, when he shall please to proclaim his mind and will unto us. It freeth us from laborious and anxious inquiries, from endless disputes and janglings, from urging ineffectual arguments, and answering cross difficulties, &c. It doth also assert itself and approve its truth to the reason of man the most advantageously that can be ; with proofs most suitable to itself, and in themselves most effectual ;⁵ waving those inferior methods of subtile argumentation and plausible language with which men are wont to confirm or set off their conceits ; which how weak they are, how unfit to maintain truth, their unsuccessfulness doth evince ; seeing by those means scarce any man hath been able thoroughly either to settle himself in or to draw others to a full persuasion concerning any important truth, discosted from sense : such methods therefore the Christian doctrine hath waved, (or rather slighted, as beneath itself,) applying arguments to the demonstration of its truth, far more potent, more sublime, and indeed truly divine ; beside its intrinsic worth, or the excellency shining in itself, (which speaketh it worthy of God, and goeth more than half way in proving it to proceed from him,) there is no kind of attestation needful or proper, which God hath not afforded thereto ; God is in himself invisible and undiscernible to any sense of ours, neither could we endure the lustre and glory of his immediate presence ; it

⁵ *Legant nostra—quam excellenter quam divine, non tanquam ex philosophorum concertationibus strepere, sed tanquam ex oraculis et Dei nubibus intonare. Aug. de Civ. Dei, ii. 19.*

SERM. must be therefore by effects of his incommunicable
XVI. power, by works extraordinary and supernatural,
(such as no creature can perform or counterfeit,) that he must, if ever, convincingly signify his purpose or pleasure to us; and such innumerable hath God vouchsafed to yield in favour and countenance of our religion; by clearly predicting and presignifying the future revelation of this doctrine by express voices and manifest apparitions from heaven, by suspending and thwarting the course of natural causes in many ways and instances, by miracles of providence no less remarkable than those of nature, by internal attestations to the minds and consciences of men; things too great slightly to be passed over, and the particular mention of which I must therefore now omit; by such wonderful means, I say, hath God taken care to convince us, that our religion came from him, which is a peculiar advantage that it hath, such as no other institution (except that of the Jews, which was a prelude thereto, and whose truth serveth to confirm it) can reasonably pretend unto; and a great perfection it is thereof, since as it is no small content to a traveller, by a direction which he can fully confide in, to know that he is in the right way to his journey's end; so it cannot but prove an exceeding satisfaction and encouragement to us to be assured, by infallible testimony of God himself, that our religion is the true and direct way unto eternal happiness.

These considerations may, I conceive, be sufficient, as to vindicate our religion from all aspersions cast upon it either by inconsiderate and injudicious, or by vain and dissolute persons; so to confirm us all in the esteem, and incite us to the practice thereof;

which use of them God in his mercy grant, through **SERM.**
Jesus Christ our Lord; to whom for ever be all **XVI.**
praise. *Amen.*

Now the God of grace, who hath called us unto ^{1 Pet. iv. 10,}
his eternal glory by Christ Jesus — make you per- ^{11.}
fect, stablish, strengthen, settle you; to him be glory
and dominion for ever and ever. Amen.

Now our Lord Jesus Christ himself, and God, ^{2 Thess. ii.}
even our Father, which hath loved us, and hath ^{16, 17.}
given us everlasting consolation and good hope
through grace, comfort your hearts, and stablish
you in every good word and work.

And in Jesus Christ, &c.

S E R M O N XVII.

THAT JESUS IS THE TRUE MESSIAS.

ACTS ix. 22.

— *Proving that this is the very Christ.*

But Saul increased the more in strength, and confounded the Jews which dwelt at Damascus, proving that this is the very Christ. *Ex-seb. Hist.* i. 3.

AS for the name of *Messias*, there is evident reason why it should not be openly expressed in the ancient predictions; it being an easy thing for any persons, out of imposture or wantonness, to have assumed that name; and consequently it would not have suited so well the true person. It was therefore more expedient, that his name should rather only be covertly signified or intimated; it was sufficient that a name should be imposed on him well agreeing to his office and chief performances. There be indeed several names attributed to the *Messias*; *Isa. vii. 14. They shall call his name Emanuel*, said *Isaiah*; *Jer. xxiii. 6. This is his name, whereby he shall be called, The Lord our Righteousness, (Jehovah tsidkenu;)* and, *Isa. ix. 6. His name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace*, said *Isaiah* again; but it is apparent, that these were not intended to be so much his proper names, as attributes or epithets congruous unto him in regard to the eminency of his person and performances.

The prophet Zechariah seemeth also (insisting in SERM. XVII. the footsteps of Isaiah and Jeremiah) to assign him the name Netser, (or the Branch;) *Behold the man whose name is The Branch:* but this only denoted an appellation suiting him, as derived from the stock of David, and might beside mystically allude to some circumstance concerning him. It doth not therefore appear, that the one proper name, by which the Messias, as the Son of man, should be known and called, is directly forementioned; yet it is reasonable to suppose, that God would have an especial care, that he should have one befitting him. It was one of the seven things which the Talmudists say were constituted before the world: the *law, repentance, paradise, hell, the throne of glory, the sanctuary, the name of the Messias*; according to that in the seventy-second Psalm, ver. 17. *Ante solem primum nomen ejus*; so it seems they read it: the LXX. have it, *πρὸ τοῦ ἡλίου διαμενεῖ τὸ ὄνομα αὐτοῦ.*

It was anciently a method of Divine Providence to impose upon persons (destinated by God to be especial subjects of his favour and eminent ministers of his glory) names answerable to the nature of their employment, or to the design which was by their means and ministry to be accomplished. Whereby as God's care and providence over human affairs was declared, so men upon the mention of such names were admonished to consider the divine benefits, and the duties correspondent to them. The particular reason of imposing such names is sometime expressly set down; as in the cases of Seth, Abraham, Israel, Solomon; sometime it seems tacitly implied, the actions of the persons interpreting the reason of their

Zech. vi.
12. iii. 8.
Is. iv. 2. xi. 1.
Jer. xxiii. 5.
xxxiii. 15.
Matt. ii. 23.

Gen. iv. 25.
xvii. 5.
xxxii. 28.
1 Chr. xxii.
9.

SERM. names; as in Melchizedek, Joshua, Malachi, and per-
XVII. haps in many others.

Gen. xiii.

18.

Heb. vii. 1.

John x. 36.

This method with great reason we may suppose that the same divine wisdom would use in assigning a name to that person, whom from the beginning of things he had promised, and before the foundation of the world had designed to sanctify and send into the world, for achieving the most high and excellent design that ever, for the glory of God and the good of his creation, was to be undertaken in this world. Most fit it would be, that God himself should be his god-father; that he should have no ordinary, no casual, no insignificant name; but such an one, which being heard might instruct and admonish us, might raise in us a sense of God's infinite mercy and bounty toward us; might breed love in our hearts, and impress veneration on our minds toward him, who should bear that auspicious and comfortable name; that name, which as the spouse of the mystical Solomon in her mystical song, did sing, is *as an ointment poured forth*, full of most wholesome and most pleasant fragrancy.

Cant. i. 3.

Is. xlv. 9.

xxxv. 4.

xlix. 8, 26.

lxiii. 1. lv.

5. lii. 7, 10.

lxi. 10. lix.

16.

Hos. i. 7.

Zech. ix. 9.

John iv. 42.

Now since of all the Messias's performances none was to be more signal, than that of saving; to publish, to purchase, to effect salvation, were to be (according to what the prophets expressly and frequently say) his peculiar works; to be the Saviour of the world was (as we before touched, according to the common opinion of the Jews) a proper attribute of his.

Wherefore the name Jesus (which we are told in the Gospel was by direction from God imparted by particular revelation, brought by an archangel from

heaven, imposed on our Lord) did very well suit the **SERM.**
 Messias. No other name could be more sweet or **XVII.**
 acceptable; no other name could better become **Matt. i. 21.**
 him, who was to redeem men from all their ene- **Luke i. 32.**
 mies, their slaveries, their errors, their sins, their **ii. 21.**
 miseries.

It was indeed a name not in its immediate appli-
 cation altogether new, for many others had borne it:
 Jesus, the son of Justus, we have mentioned in **St. Col. iv. 11.**
 Paul; Jesus the son of Sirach, that excellent writer,
 we know; and divers others so named occur in Jo-
 sephus: yet was it questionless by God's providence,
 or by Moses, by divine instinct, first produced with **Basil. Iren.**
 relation to the Messias: *Moses called Oshea the* **&c. Num. xiii.**
son of Nun Jehoshua, saith the text: being in a **16.**
 mysterious exchange from a former name assigned
 to the famous Jesus (as not only Bensirach, but the
 apostle to the Hebrews write him) the son of Nun, **Eccles. xlii.**
 who of all the ancient types did most exactly (in of- **Heb. iv. 8.**
 fice and performance) represent and presignify the
 Messias; being, as Bensirach speaks, *great for the*
saving of God's elect; whose actions are wonder-
 fully congruous to those which we attribute to our
 Jesus. For, by the way, to shew the resemblance,
 (omitting less, and more nice congruities,) as Joshua **Num. xiv.**
 did bring the good report, and evangelized concern- **7.**
 ing the promised land, (when other false or faint in-
 quirers defamed it, and discouraged the people from
 entering;) as he was educated under Moses, and
 served him faithfully; as he succeeded in the ad-
 ministration and government of God's people, per-
 fecting what Moses had begun of deliverance and
 settlement to them; as he brought the Israelites
 (not that old disbelieving, mutinous, and repining

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Josh. v. 2.

Heb. xi.

Gal. iv. 4.
Matt. iii.
15. v. 17.
Ἀρχὴν
ζωῆς, σωτη-
ρίας, πί-
στεως.

generation, but a new progeny of better disposed people) finally out of the wilderness into Canaan, by God's miraculous assistance, subduing their enemies, and establishing them in a quiet possession of the promised land, allotting unto each tribe its inheritance; and as he did re-circumcise the children of Israel: so did our heavenly Jesus first make a true and faithful discovery concerning the mystical land of promise (that better country) flowing with spiritual milk and honey, (abundant with all spiritual comforts and pleasures, for the food, sustenance, and refreshment of our souls.) He was born under the Law, and submitted to its injunctions, fulfilling all righteousness. He survived it, (the part of it which was purely Mosaical and arbitrary,) and did complete it. He doth conduct God's regenerate people (such as believe, and willingly follow him) out of the desert state of error, guilt, and sin, into the superior state of happy rest and joy, with miraculous power and efficacy; vanquishing all the spiritual Amorites, (the *devil, world, and flesh*) which infest, obstruct, and oppose them; settling them in a perpetual, undisturbed, and immoveable enjoyment of that blissful region; having also by a spiritual circumcision prepared and consecrated them to God. Our Saviour therefore, not only when he at last in fulness of truth did come into the world, but anciently in type and shadow, may be supposed to have received this name Jesus, conferred upon him in the person of Joshua, his most illustrious representative. It certainly was most apposite to the Messiah.

That Jesus (that person, whose birth, life, death, resurrection, and ascension hence, are related in the evangelical histories) is *the Christ*, is the principal

article of pure faith; the most peculiar doctrine of SERM. XVII.
our religion as such, and as distinct from all other
religions: it indeed virtually comprehends all other
doctrines of moment therein, regarding either faith
or practice. For that our being persuaded that
Jesus is the Christ, implies, that we apprehend our-
selves obliged to embrace for truth whatever was
taught by him and his apostles, to obey all his laws,
to rely upon him for attainment of all the mercies,
and blessings, and rewards, which he promised to
dispense, in that order and upon those terms, which
the gospel declareth. Whence to the hearty belief
of this point such great commendations are given, so
high rewards are offered, so excellent privileges are
annexed in the scriptures. Whence also the declar-
ing, proving, and persuading this doctrine was the
chief matter of the apostles' preaching, as both their
profession and practice do shew. *The Jews*, saith
St. Paul to the Corinthians, *require a sign, and the*
Greeks seek after wisdom; but we preach Christ,
that was crucified. And, *I determined*, saith he 1 Cor. i. 23.
again of himself, *not to know any thing among you,* ii. 2.
(that is, not to discover any other knowledge, not to
insist on any other subject,) *save Jesus Christ, even*
him that was crucified. This, St. John tells us, was καὶ τοῦτον
the drift of his writing the gospel, (which is a more ἱσταμένον
extensive and durable way of preaching.) *These* John xx.
things, saith he, *were written, that ye may believe* ^{31.}
that Jesus is the Christ. And their practice, suit-
able to such professions, is apparent in divers pas-
sages of this book, wherein their acts and their dis-
courses are reported. This text particularly repre-
sents the scope to which St. Paul mainly directed his

SERM. preaching, which was the maintenance and. persua-
 XVII. sion of this point, that *Jesus is the Christ*.

It is therefore very requisite, that we should well understand the meaning thereof, and that we should firmly be persuaded of its truth. To which purpose I shall endeavour, by God's assistance, to imitate St. Paul's practice here, who did *συμβιβάζειν*, (that is the Greek word here, signifying primarily to put or bring things together, and thence in a way of collection or argumentation to teach,) who, I say, did instruct his auditors, collecting it from testimonies of ancient scripture, and confirming it by arguments grounded thereon. In performing which I shall observe this method :

1. I shall explain the notion and reason of this name, or title, *Christ*.

2. I shall shew (that which is here tacitly supposed) that there was by God's appointment to be, or to come into the world from God, one person, signally that, which this name or title imports, *ὁ Χριστός, the very Christ*.

3. I shall argue that *Jesus* was that person.

4. I shall explain in what manner, in what respects, to what purposes, *Jesus*, in the New Testament, is represented as *Christ*.

5. I shall make some practical application of the point.

John i. 21.
iv. 25.

I. For the first particular. Christ is a name, or title, importing office and dignity ; being the same with Messiah, that in Greek, this in Hebrew, signifying, the Anointed ; the which appellation we find attributed to several persons upon the following ground : Of ancient times, in the eastern countries,

(abounding as with good oil, so with many delicate odoriferous spices,) it seems generally to have been the manner, (as from Hazael the Syrian his being anointed may probably be collected,) it was however such among the Jews, to separate or consecrate persons, and things also I might add, designed to any great or extraordinary employment, by anointing them with ointments composed of those ingredients; they symbolizing, or denoting thereby, as it seems, both a plentiful effusion upon them of gifts and faculties qualifying them for such services; and also a comfortable and pleasant diffusion of good and grateful effects expected from them; (from the use of things, the performances of persons thus sanctified.) *Thy name*, saith the spouse in the Canticles, *is an ointment poured forth*; that is, thy name is very delightful, very acceptable. And, *Behold*, saith David, commending brotherly love and concord, *how good and pleasant a thing it is for brethren to dwell together in unity; it is like the precious ointment upon the head, that ran down upon the beard, even Aaron's beard*: so good and pleasant were those employments hoped to be, to which men were by such unction inaugurated. We find especially three sorts of persons, to whom this consecration did, by divine appointment, belong; kings, priests, and prophets; persons by whose ministry God of old did manage his intercourse with men, in governing them and communicating his blessings to them, both in an ordinary way (so he used kings and priests) and in an extraordinary manner, therein he employed prophets; which sorts of persons are therefore styled God's anointed; kings and priests more frequently, but sometimes also prophets; as in that of the Psalm;

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1 Kings
xix. 15.

Cant. i. 2.

Ps. cxxxiii.
1, 2.

SERM. *Touch not mine anointed, and do my prophets no*
XVII. *harm*; where prophets and the anointed of God do

Ps. cv. 15. seem to denote the same thing, and one to expound
1 Chron. the other: however they belong to the same persons;
xvi. 22. for Abraham, whom together with the other patri-
archs those words concern, is expressly called a pro-
phet. (Now therefore, saith the text, *restore the*
Gen. xx. 7. *man his wife; for he is a prophet, and he shall*
pray for thee, and thou shalt live.) And that Isaac
Heb. xi. 20. was a prophet, the apostle to the Hebrews intimates,
saying; *By faith Isaac blessed Jacob and Esau*
concerning things to come. The same is plain of
Jacob, who before his death uttered many great and
remarkable predictions. The patriarchs therefore
probably as prophets were styled *God's anointed*.
But to remark somewhat of these great offices, and
their anointing singly:

For priests, although at first all the sons of Aaron
were thus consecrated, according to that law in
Exod. xxx. Exodus, *Thou shalt anoint Aaron, and his sons,*
30. xl. 15. *that they may minister unto me in the priest's of-*
Χριστοῖς. *fice*; yet the Jewish masters tell us, that afterward
Mac. ii. 1, *in all the course of times only the high priest was*
10. Selden *so consecrated.* Whence by the anointed, or the
de Succ. ii. priest that is anointed, is, say they, meant the high
9. priest, in distinction from other inferior priests.
Levit. iv. 3, *so consecrated.* Whence by the anointed, or the
5, 16. vi. priest that is anointed, is, say they, meant the high
22. priest, in distinction from other inferior priests.

οὗς καὶ αὐ- For kings, the Jewish doctors also (as master
τοὺς νόματι Selden reports) do tell us, that such of them, who
θεῶν Πρωφῆ- in a legal, orderly, and unquestioned course of right
αὶ Χριστοῖς in did succeed into the kingdom, were not themselves
εἰρηνοῦς τι- in person anointed, (they being conceived to derive
νας Χριστοῦ a sufficient consecration from their ancestors;) but
ἀπὸ γένε- all those, who in an extraordinary way by special
ζοντο. designation, (as Saul, David, Jehu, Hazael,) or upon
Euseb. Hist. i. 3. *2 Kings ix.*
3. xi. 12.

a doubtful and controverted, or opposed title, (as **SERM.** Solomon and Joas,) did assume the royal charge, **XVII.** were thus initiated: (how ancient also the custom **1 Kings xix. 15. i. 39.** of anointing princes was, may be seen from that expression in Jotham's parable; *The trees went forth **Judges ix. 8.** to anoint a king over them, and they said to the olive tree, Reign thou over us.*)

As for prophets, we do not find that they were commonly, or according to ordinary rule, anointed; but one plain instance we have of Elisha, substituted to Elijah, (the chief of prophets in his time,) in this manner: *Elisha*, it is said by God, *the son of **1 Kings xix. 16.** Shaphat, shalt thou anoint to be prophet in thy room*; who was thus consecrated, probably, because he was to be a prophet more than ordinary, endued with higher gifts, and designed to greater actions, than common prophets were then; or perhaps because he was to be the archprophet, or head of the prophets at that time.

We may also further observe, that some persons, who (in probability) did not partake any material unction, but were yet destinated by God, and qualified and employed as special instruments of his providence or grace, for producing effects suitable to any of those offices, have been therefore styled *God's **1 Chron. xvi. 22.** anointed*. Upon which score the patriarchs (by whom God's true religion was maintained and conveyed) do seem to have been called God's anointed. And king Cyrus (whose ministry God used in the reedifying his temple and refreshing his people) is **Isa. xlv. 1. xlv. 28.** therefore termed God's Christ, or anointed; (*Thus saith the Lord to his anointed, to Cyrus my Christ; τῷ Χριστῷ μου Κύρῳ*) the name of the sign being im-

SERM. parted to persons who were endued with the qua-
 XVII. lities, or did perform the effects signified thereby.

These things being considered, it appeareth that the name *Christ* doth import a person in a special and signal manner designed and ordained by God to one, or some, or all of these charges and functions; an extraordinary king, or a great priest, or an eminent prophet; or one, in whom either more or all of these did concur. So much may suffice for the notion and reason of this title, *Christ*.

II. Now that there was a Person supereminently endued with all these characters, (a *Christ* in all these respects,) decreed by God in due time to come into the world for accomplishment of the greatest purposes answerable to that title, (for the instruction and reformation of the world, for the erecting and managing an universal and perpetual kingdom, for the reconciliation and benediction of mankind, for the reduction of all nations to the acknowledgment of God, and obedience to his will, and hope in his mercy,) many express passages in the ancient scripture declare.

That such a prophet should be sent, Moses in express terms foretold: *The Lord thy God*, saith he, Deut. xviii. 15, 18. *shall raise up unto thee a Prophet from the midst of* John i. 46. *thee, of thy brethren, like unto me; unto him shall* Acts iii. 22. *ye hearken: and, I will,* saith God himself, *raise* vii. 37. *them up a Prophet from among their brethren, like unto thee; and I will put my words into his mouth, and he shall speak unto them all that I shall command him, &c.* which words plainly describe a very extraordinary prophet some time to come, who was (signally and especially, beyond all other prophets)

to resemble Moses; who consequently was to accom- SERM. XVII.
 plish high designs, and to achieve wonderful acts;
 to conduct and deliver God's people, to reveal God's
 mind and will, to promulge a new law, and establish
 a new covenant; so his resembling Moses doth im-
 ply, so his mission doth signify; (for why, if he
 were not intended for the performance of somewhat
 great and new, even beyond what Moses did; should
 he be designed so formally; what need or reason
 had there been of his mission after Moses?) and so
 the later prophets do interpret the great Lawgiver's
 words: who largely predict concerning one, ordained
 by God to come, who should eminently discharge
 all parts of the prophetical function; who should
 disclose new truths to men, should proclaim a new Jer. xxxi.
 law to the world, should *establish a new covenant* 33. Isa. xlix. 8.
with the house of Israel, and with all people; who
 should propagate the knowledge and worship of
 God, enlightening the Gentiles, and converting them
 unto God; who should instruct the ignorant,
 strengthen the faint, comfort the afflicted; accord-
 ing to divers passages concerning him; as, for in-
 stance, that in Isaiah, cited by St. Luke: *The Spi-* Isa. lxi. 1.
rit of the Lord is upon me; because the Lord hath Luke iv. 18.
anointed me to preach good tidings unto the meek;
he hath sent me to bind up the brokenhearted—
 and that in the same prophet alleged by St. Matthew;
Behold my servant, whom I uphold; mine elect, in Isa. xlii. 1.
whom my soul delighteth; I have put my Spirit upon Matt. xii. 78.
him: he shall bring forth judgment unto the Gen-
tiles: he shall not cry, &c.; which being anointed to
 preach tidings and to bring forth judgment from God,
 being elected and inspired by God in order to such
 performances, are peculiar marks of a prophet; such

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promulgation of God's will, such ministration of direction and comfort from God, are the proper employment of a prophet ; that is, of an especial agent sent and qualified by God to transact spiritual affairs with men, and to declare or denounce his pleasure to them.

The ancient scriptures do also plainly signify concerning the same person, that he should be a great Prince constituted by God to govern his people for ever in righteousness, peace, and prosperity ; endued with power requisite for delivering them from oppression and slavery ; for subduing their enemies, for reducing the nations under subjection unto God.

So Isaiah : *For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given ; and the government shall be upon his shoulders—Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice for ever.* Jeremiah : *Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that I will raise unto David a righteous Branch, and a King shall reign and prosper, and shall execute judgment and justice in the earth : in his days Judah shall be saved, and Israel shall dwell safely.* Ezekiel : *I will save my flock, they shall be no more a prey—and I will set up one shepherd over them, and he shall feed them—they shall also walk in my statutes, and observe my statutes, and do them.* Daniel : *I saw in the night visions, and, behold, one like the Son of man came with the clouds of heaven, and came to the Ancient of days—And there was given him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all people, and nations, and languages shall serve him : his dominion is an*

Acts ii. 36.

Luke i. 71,
74.Isa. ix. 6.
xi. 1, 10.
xvi. 5.Jer. xxiii. 5.
xxxiii. 15.
xxx. 8.Ezek.
xxxiv. 22,
&c.
xxxvi. 21,
&c. xxxvii.
21, &c.Dan. ii. 13,
14. ii. 44,
45.

everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed. SERM. XVII.

Hosea: The children of Israel shall return, and seek the Lord their God, and David their king; and shall fear the Lord and his goodness in the latter days. The Psalmist: I have set my King upon my holy hill of Sion; ask of me, and I will give thee the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession. Hos. iii. 5. Psal. ii. 6, 8. lxxii. 11, 17. xlv. 6. lxxix. 3, 27, 36. cxxxii. 17, 18.
In these and in many other places do the prophets speak (very perspicuously and magnificently) concerning the kingdom, royal state, and princely achievements of this great personage who should come.

That he also should assume and execute the priestly function may also be learned from prophetic instruction. For of him Zechariah thus spake: *Behold the man whose name is The Branch; (a name, which so often (in sense) is attributed to this Person, as sprouting from the stock of David;) he shall grow up out of his place, and he shall build the temple of the Lord; and he shall bear the glory, and shall sit, and rule upon his throne; and he shall be a priest upon his throne; and the counsel of the Lord shall be between them both.* Zech. vi. 12. ἀνατελὴν ποτ.
 Of him also David spake: *The Lord hath sworn, and will not repent, Thou art a priest for ever after the order of Melchisedek.* Ps. cx. 4. Dau. ix. 24.
To make reconciliation for iniquity, (which Daniel ascribes to him;) to bear the sins of the people, and to make intercession for the transgressors, (which are assigned to him by Isaiah;) are also performances, from which his sacerdotal office may be collected. Isa. liii. 12.

These things being considered, it is no wonder that the ancient Jews (although the text of scripture Ps. xlv. 7. Isa. lxi. 1.

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doth seldom, perhaps not oftener than once, (in the ninth of Daniel,) explicitly and directly apply this name of Christ, or Messias, to this illustrious Person, so prophesied of and promised to come) did especially assign this title unto him ; it seeming of any most congruous and most comprehensive of what appertained to him ; most apt to denote all the prerogatives, the endowments, the achievements, the effects, which should belong to him, or proceed from him. Whence it is observed by the learned, that the Chaldee Paraphrase (composed, as they say, before Jesus our Lord's time, by the priests, as an interpretation of the not so exactly understood Hebrew scripture, for edification and instruction of the people) doth very often apply unto him this name of the Messias : according to whose exposition and style, together with tradition continually deduced down from the prophets themselves, (as is probable,) we see plainly from the New Testament, and from other history conspiring therewith, that God's people unanimously did expect a person under this name and notion, who should be endued with qualities and should perform actions conformable to the characters mentioned, to come in determinate time into the world. Of Anna the prophetess it is said, that

Luke ii. 38. *she gave thanks likewise to the Lord, and spake of him* *πᾶσι τοῖς προσδεχομένοις λύτρωσιν, to all that expected redemption in Jerusalem.* Hence when St. John the Baptist did live, and teach in a manner

Luke iii. 15. *extraordinary, the people did expect, and all men mused in their hearts concerning him, whether he*

John i. 19. *were the Christ. Yea the Jews* (that is, their senate, or great sanhedrim) *sent priests and Levites to inquire of him, whether he were the Christ or*

so: and when Jesus's admirable discourses and SERM.
works had convinced divers persons, they said, XVII.
When Christ comes, shall he do greater miracles John vii. 31.
than this man hath done? and the report which
Philip made to Nathanael concerning Jesus was
this; *We have found him, of whom Moses in the* John i. 45.
Law, and the Prophets, did write: so at large they
did presume concerning *a Christ to come.* That John iv. 42.
they particularly did conceive he should be a great
prophet, who should abundantly declare God's truth
and will, may be gathered from divers passages; as
from that in St. John: *Men therefore seeing the* John vi. 14.
miracle that Jesus had done, said, That this is in
truth the prophet, who was to come into the world.
Thus may that in St. Luke be taken; *And there* Luk. vii. 16.
came a fear upon all; and they glorified God,
saying, That the great prophet is risen up among
us; and, That God hath visited his people: and
this the Samaritan woman implied, when she said,
I know that the Messias comes; and when he shall John iv. 25.
come, he will tell us all things. That they sup-
posed he should be a king, who should be furnished
with mighty power, and should perform wonderful
acts; who should assume the government of God's
people with royal majesty, and execute it with glo-
rious success, is most clear. It was no wonder to
king Herod to hear the wise men's inquiry, *Where* Matt. ii. 2,
is he that is born King of the Jews? Upon it he ⁴
immediately demands of the Scribes *where Christ is*
to be born. Hence no sooner did Nathanael believe
in Christ, but he cries out, *Master, thou art the* John i. 50.
Son of God, thou art the King of Israel. It was
upon this supposition that the priests grounded their
calumny; *We have found this man perverting the* Luke xxiii.
3.

SERM. *nation, and forbidding to give tribute to Cæsar,*
 XVII. *saying, that he himself is Christ, the King; as*

Luke xix.
 38.

also hence (upon information and by instinct from them) Pilate asked him that question, *Art thou the King of the Jews?* hence likewise proceeded that acclamation; Εὐλογημένος ὁ ἐρχόμενος βασιλεὺς, *Blessed is the King, that is to come in the name of the Lord.* And it was from this ancient popular prejudice, that the apostles asked Jesus after his resurrection, *Lord, wilt thou at this time restore the kingdom to Israel?* It is indeed the ordinary title, which the Talmudists and ancient Rabbins give the Messias, *Hammelech Messiah*, Messias the King.

Acts i. 6.

That the Messias in their opinion was also to be a priest, is not so clearly apparent; yet it may probably be inferred: that they understood the 110th Psalm to respect the Messias is very likely, or rather certain, from that passage in the gospel, in which

Matt. xxii.
 43.

Jesus asked the Pharisees, *What think ye of Christ? whose son is he?* and they answering, *The Son of David*, he returned upon them this puzzling question; *How then doth David in the spirit* (that is, prophetically) *call him Lord, saying, The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit thou on my right hand?*

which question confounded them, they not daring to deny that Psalm to respect the Messias, (it being the received opinion among the doctors,) nor yet seeing how the relations of *Son* and *Lord* were reconcilable: and admitting that Psalm was to be referred unto the Messias, they must consequently acknowledge him to be a priest; for it is there said,

Psal. cx. 4.

The Lord hath sworn, and will not repent, Thou art a priest for ever after the order of Melchizedek. It was also an opinion passing among them,

that the Messias should be the Saviour of the world, as may be collected from that saying of the Samaritans; *We have heard him ourselves, and know that this is indeed the Christ, the Saviour of the world*: which being their opinion, and toward the salvation of men it being needful that a reconciliation of them unto God, and an expiation of their sins, (which are sacerdotal acts) should be procured by him, it seems to follow, that they had some notion of his *priesthood*. Indeed the persuasion concerning a Messias to come, about the time when our Lord appeared, became diffused over the whole eastern parts; as even pagan historians (Tacitus and Suetonius) do report^b. And the conceit thereof was so vigorous in the Jews, that it excited them to rebellion, and encouraged them with great obstinacy to persist therein, as not only those historians, but Josephus himself telleth usⁱ; he also together with them (which is somewhat strange) referring the intent of those prophecies, and the verifying of that opinion, to the person of the emperor Vespasian. The same conceit did then likewise occasion many pretenders and impostors (such as Theudas, and Judas the Galilean) to arise, disposing also the

SERM.
XVII.

John iv. 42.
Luke ii. 38

^b Percrebuerat oriente toto vetus et constans opinio esse in fatis, ut eo tempore Judæa profecti rerum potirentur. *Suet. in Vesp.*

Pluribus persuasio inerat antiquis sacerdotum literis contineri, eo ipso tempore fore, ut valesceret oriens, profectique Judæa rerum potirentur. *Tacitus Hist. v.*

ⁱ Τὸ δὲ ἐπάραν αὐτοὺς μάλιστα πρὸς τὸν πόλεμον ἦν χρησμὸς ἀμφίβολος ὁμοίως ἐν τοῖς ἱεροῖς εὐρημένους γράμμασιν, ὡς κατὰ τὸν καιρὸν ἐκεῖνον ἀπὸ τῆς χώρας τις αὐτῶν ἄρξει τῆς οἰκουμένης.—ἐδήλου δ' ἅμα τὴν περὶ Οὐεσπασιανῶ τοῦ λόγιον ἡγεμονίαν, ἀποδειχθέντος ἐπὶ Ἰουδαίας αὐτοκράτορος. *Jos. ἀλώσ. vi. 31.*

SERM. XVII. people so easily to be deluded by them, and so readily to run after them, as they did to their own harm.

Thus according to the ancient scriptures, interpreted and backed by the current tradition and general consent of God's people, it is sufficiently apparent, that a Messias (according to the notion premised) was to come into the world.

III. Now further, that Jesus, whom we acknowledge, was indeed that Messias, may appear plainly from the perfect correspondency of all circumstances belonging to the Messias's appearance, and of all characters suiting his person, and of all things to be performed by him ; together with whatever was to be consequent upon his presence and performances ; according to ancient presignifications and predictions, and according to the passable opinions of God's people concerning him ; the which, as they cannot possibly suit with any other person that hath yet appeared, or may reasonably be expected to come hereafter, so they exactly agree to the coming, and person, and practice, and success of Jesus.

Gal. iv. 4.

Eph. i. 10.

Acts xiv. 16.

xvii. 30.

come) did very well agree to Jesus. *But when the fulness of time was come, God sent forth his Son,*

&c. *Fulness* in regard to ancient prediction, in regard to fitness of season. For as the Messias was to be *the desire of all nations*, so Jesus did come then, when by special instinct a general expectation and desire of his coming was raised in the world ; at the time, when the patriarch Jacob foretold that

Gen. xlix.
8.

Shiloh would come, viz. when the sceptre was just

departed from Judah, and a Lawgiver from his feet; Judæa being brought under the dominion of SERM. XVII.
strangers; (such were the Romans, such was king Herod.) About the expiration of Daniel's weeks, (however commenced or computed,) the time deter- Dan. ix. 24.
mined to finish transgression, and to make an end of sins, to make reconciliation for iniquity, and to introduce everlasting righteousness, to seal up the vision and prophecy, and to anoint the most Holy, (as the prophet speaks.) Shortly before the destruction of Jerusalem, according to that of Daniel; And Dan. ix. 26.
after sixty and two weeks shall Messias be cut off, but not for himself: and the people of the prince that shall come shall destroy the city and the sanctuary. When that Zion, out of which, as Isa. ii. 3.
Isaiah tells us, the law was to go forth, and out of which Isa. lix. 20.
the Redeemer should come, and turn ungodliness from Jacob, did stand and flourish. When the temple did stand, which the prophets Malachi and Haggai did predict should be illustrated by the presence of the Messiah; The Lord, whom ye seek, Mal. iii. 1.
saith Malachi, shall suddenly come to his temple; even the messenger of the covenant, in whom ye delight: and, I will, saith Haggai, shake all na- Hag. ii. 7,
tions, and the desire of all nations shall come; and I will fill this house with glory, saith the Lord: the glory of this latter house shall be greater than the glory of the former, saith the Lord of hosts. Before Jewry was desolated, Jerusalem destroyed, the tribes and families of Israel confounded, all that people wofully dispersed, and in a palpable manner deserted by God. When the Isa. ii. 4.
Jewish religion (which the Messias was to complete) xi. 6. lxxv. 25. lxxvi. 12.
was by a numerous accession of proselytes dissemi- Ps. lxxii. 7.

SERM. nated and diffused through many provinces of that
 XVII. one vast empire, under which a great part of the
 world was united and settled durably in a calm
 state of peace and order: when one or two lan-
 guages were commonly understood by all, and men
 thereby more easily conversed together; and when
 the ancient scriptures being translated into Greek
 Dan. xii. 4. were so widely intelligible. When mankind was
 become generally civilized and cultivated with laws,
 and policy, and learning; with knowledge of arts
 and philosophy; the world then beginning of itself
 to open its eyes, so as to discern the errors and de-
 ceits, by which it long had been abused; and was
 thence well prepared to learn, and rendered very
 susceptible of divine truth; when all things thus
 conspired with good advantage to entertain the
 Gal. iv. 4. Christ, then *in the fulness of time*, in the right and
 Eph. i. 10. *proper season*, (*καιροῖς ἰδίοις*, as St. Paul speaketh)
 1 Tim. ii. 6. *καίρῳ δεκτῷ*, *in an acceptable time*, as Isaiah pro-
 Isa. xlix. 8. phesied, did Jesus come, to instruct and reform the
 2 Cor. vi. 2. world, as he professed. It was Porphyry's objection
 against Christianity, and an obvious one, why Christ
 did not come before, but in the latter days; to which
 the particular fitness of this time is an answer.

The other circumstances; the family out of which,
 the place where, the manner in which, Jesus was
 born, did also punctually correspond. He was to be
 an Israelite, according to the promise made of old
 Gen. xxii. 18. to Abraham, that *in his seed all the nations of the
 earth should be blessed*; and according to Moses's
 Deut. xviii. 15. prophecy; *The Lord thy God shall raise up unto
 thee a Prophet from the midst of thee, of thy bre-
 thren*. He was to come out of the tribe of Judah;
 Gen. xlix. 7, &c. as the patriarch Jacob in his last prophetic rap-
 Rev. v. 5. xxii. 16.

ture did by various expressions intimate and signify. SERM. XVII.
 Particularly he was to rise out of the family of David, as the prophets frequently and clearly did avouch; for he was, as Isaiah said, *to be a rod out of the stem of Jesse, and a Branch going out of his roots; a righteous Branch*, according to Jeremiah, *whom God would raise to David*. He whom Solomon (that most wise, peaceable, and prosperous prince, who raised that glorious temple, the emblem of God's church) did presignify; and in whom the promises made to David concerning the perpetuity of his throne should be made good; *There shall not fail thee a man, &c.—Thine house and thy kingdom shall be established for ever before thee; thy throne shall be established for ever*; especially that absolute and irrevocable promise ratified by God's oath; *I have made a covenant with my chosen, I have sworn unto David my servant, Thy seed will I establish for ever, and build up thy throne unto all generations*: who consequently by reason of conjunction in blood, and mutual representation, David prefiguring him, and he by succession into the imperial right expressing David, is by several of the prophets (by Jeremiah, by Ezekiel, by Hosea) called David: whence the learned among the Jews did consent, that the Messias was to be the Son of David; *How say the Scribes, that Christ is the Son of David?* and, *What think ye of Christ? whose son is he?* (it is our Lord's question to the Pharisees;) *They say unto him, The Son of David*. Yea the people were generally informed herein, and possessed with this sentiment; *Hath not the scripture said, that Christ cometh of the seed of David?* was a popular speech in St. John. *And all the*

Isa. xi. 1,
 Jer. xxiii. 5.
 xxxiii. 15.

1 Kings
 viii. 25.
 2 Sam. vii.
 16.
 2 Chron.
 vi. 16.
 Ps. lxxxix.
 3. cxxxii.
 11.
 Luke i. 32.
 69.
 Acts ii. 30.
 Jer. xxxiii.
 17, 21, 22,
 26. xxx. 9.
 Hos. iii. 5.
 Ezek.
 xxxiv. 23,
 24. xxxvii.
 24, 25.

Mark xii.
 35.
 Matt. xxii.
 42. (xxi. 9.
 Matt. xii.
 23.)
 John vii. 42.

Matt. xii.
 23.

SERM. XVII. *people were amazed, and said, Is not this the Son of David?* Now accordingly that Jesus came out of

Luke ii. 4. *of the house and lineage of David,*

Matt. i. 20. both according to natural and legal succession,) the
 Luke i. 32, express affirmation of angels, the positive attesta-
 69. tion of his parents and kindred, (who best knew,) the genealogies (according to the manner of those times and that nation) carefully preserved, and produced by the evangelists, do assure us; neither doth it appear that Jesus's adversaries did ever contest this point, but seem by their silence to have granted it, as easily and evidently proveable by authentic records and testimonies.

More precisely yet for the *place* of the Messias's birth, it was to be the town of Bethlehem; so the prophet Micah foretold; thus cited by St. Matthew:

Mich. v. 2. *Thou Bethlehem, in the land of Juda, art not the*
 Matt. ii. 6. *least among the princes of Juda; for out of thee shall come a Governor, that shall rule my people Israel.* So from thence did the learned judge; for

Matt. ii. 5. being consulted by king Herod *where Christ was to be born*, they answered that *in Bethlehem*: and so also did the people commonly believe, as appears

John vii. 42. by the foresaid passage in St. John; *Hath not the scripture said, that Christ cometh of the seed of David, and out of the town of Bethlehem, where David was?* Now that Jesus should be there born, God himself took especial care, ordering it by his providence, that by imperial edict the world should be taxed, or registered; and that in order thereto the parents of Jesus should be forced to go from a distant place of their habitation unto Bethlehem, the place of their stock and family; that so both Jesus

might be born there, and that good circumstance SERM.
XVII.
might appear certain by the unquestionable testimony of the censual tables, unto which (extant even in their times) Justin Martyr, Tertullian, and St. Chrysostom refer those, who would be certified in that particular^k.

That place also of his parents' abode in Nazareth of Galilee, upon which was consequent his first appearance in way of action, was so ordered, as to answer ancient predictions; according to which it was said, that *in the land of Zabulon and Nephthali, by the way of the sea, beyond Jordan in Galilee of the nations, the people that walked in darkness did see a great light, and they that dwelt in the land of the shadow of death, upon them the light shined.* Isa. ix. 1, 2.
Matt. iv. 15.

The manner also of the Messiah's birth, was, as became such a Person, to be very extraordinary, and different from the common generation of men: for he was not only to be *one like the Son of man*, as Dan. vii. 13. the prophet Daniel terms him, and indeed *the Son of David*, as all the prophecies declare of him, but the *Son of God* also; for, *Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee*, saith God of him in the second Psalm. And that which in the first less perfect sense was said of Solomon, (who prefigured him,) was, according to a more sublime meaning, and more exactly, to agree unto him: *He shall be my son, and I will be his father; and I will establish the throne of his kingdom over Israel for ever:* 1 Chron. xxii. 10.
2 Sam. vii. 13. *Also I will make him my first-born, higher than the kings of the earth:* Ps. lxxxix. 27. and accordingly we see,

^k Κώμη δὲ τίς ἐστὶν ἐν τῇ χώρᾳ Ἰουδαίων σταδίους λ.ε' Ἱεροσολύμων, ἐν ᾗ ἐγενήθη Ἰησοῦς Χριστός, ὡς καὶ μαθεῖν δύνασθε ἐκ τῶν ἀναγραφῶν δις.
Just. Martyr. Apol. 2. Tertull. in Marc. iv. 19.

SERM. XVII. that the Jews (both the wiser and the vulgar sort) did suppose that he should be *the Son of God*; so St. John the Baptist, so Nathanael, so Martha, so St. Peter, and the other apostles, when they became persuaded that Jesus was the Christ, did presently, according to anticipation of judgment common to them with the people, confess him to be *the Son of God*; the high priest himself intimated the same, when he asked Jesus, *Art thou the Christ, the Son of the Blessed?* Yea, the devils themselves were learned and orthodox in this point; who cried out, *Thou art the Christ the Son of God*. Now that, according to those prophecies and those traditions, the Messias should be in a more than ordinary way, and (for the justifying of God's truth together with the satisfying men) should evidently appear to be the Son of God, it was requisite (at least convenient) that his birth should be procured by divine operation, without concurrence of a human father; (how otherwise, at least how better, could it be apparent that he was both the *Son of God* and *of man*?) ¹It was consequently either necessary or fit that he should be born of a virgin: and that he should indeed be so born the prophet Isaiah did signify, when he said, *The Lord himself shall give you a sign*, (that is, shall perform somewhat very remarkable and strange: what was that?) *Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Emmanuel*; which prophecy that it belonged to the Messias appears from the report and description which follows in the continuation of this

John i. 34.
49. xi. 27.
vi. 69.
Matt. xvi.
16.

Mark xiv.
61.

Matt. xxvi.

63. viii. 29.

Mark i. 24.

Luke iv. 34.

Isa. vii. 14.

Matt. i. 23.

¹ — Εἰ μὲν σημεῖόν ἐστι τὸ διδόμενον, παράδοξος ἔστω καὶ ἡ γέννησις· εἰ δὲ κοινὸς ὁ τρόπος τῆς γεννήσεως τοῦ παιδίου, μήτε σημεῖον λεγέσθω. Βασ. in Isa. vii.

particular prophecy concerning this child: *For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given, and the government shall be upon his shoulders, and his name shall be called Wonderful, &c.* which description questionless appertaineth to the Messias. The same prophet signifies the same concerning him, when he introduceth him speaking thus; *And now, saith the Lord, that formed me from the womb to be his servant, &c.* Now that Jesus in correspondence to this admirable character was born of a virgin, his parents (persons of unblameable integrity and innocence; so that even the adversaries of Jesus appear not ever to have offered to impeach them of imposture, or to have troubled them about this report coming from them) did constantly aver, angels did attest to their report, and God himself at several times by audible voices from heaven declared Jesus to be *his beloved Son*. SERM. XVII.
Isa. ix. 6.
Isa. xlix. 5.

The state and condition also, in which the Messias was first to appear, was described to be a state of external meanness and obscurity, of poverty and wretchedness, in the eye of man: a state indeed most convenient and proper for a spiritual King, a most holy Priest, an absolute Prophet; who was to teach, exercise, and exemplify the most rough and harsh pieces of righteousness and piety, (contempt of worldly vanities and pleasures; all sorts of self-denial and abstinence; the virtues of meekness, humility, and patience;) who was to manage and execute his great undertakings, not by natural or human force, but by a virtue supernatural and divine; whose power consequently would be more conspicuous in a state of visible meanness and impotency, than in a condition of worldly splendour and

SERM. strength; that also which he was to merit from
 XVII. God, and to undergo for the sake of men, doth argue
 the same: that such the Messias's state was to be,
 there are divers mystical intimations in the ancient
 scripture; but the prophet Isaiah speaks it out most
 plainly: *He shall grow up (says he, describing that
 state) before the Lord like a tender plant, and as
 a root out of a dry ground; he hath no form nor
 comeliness; and when we shall see him, there is
 no beauty that we should desire him.* And again;
*Thus saith the Lord, the Redeemer of Israel, and
 his Holy One; To him whom man despiseth, to
 him whom the nation abhorreth, to a servant of
 rulers, kings shall see and arise, princes also shall
 worship.*

Phil. ii. 7. Now that Jesus appeared thus in a poor, servile,
 2 Cor. viii. 9. and despicable condition, we need not for to prove;
 for as his followers avow it, so his adversaries are
 most ready to grant it; in the haughtiness of their
 conceit taking it for an advantage against him, it
 proves a scandal to them. *Is not this the carpenter's
 son? Is not this the carpenter, the son of Mary?
 said they; and they were offended at him.* Hence
 Matt. xiii. was it, that, as the prophet foretold, *he was de-
 spised and rejected of men, and they esteemed him
 not.* Thus all the circumstances of the Messias's
 coming were answered by those of Jesus.

Now concerning the qualities and endowments of
 the Messias, which constitute his personal character,
 they are, as was expedient, such as should dispose
 and fit him for the discharge of his great employment
 and duty with utmost advantage, and especial de-
 cency: in general, he was to be endued with super-
 eminent piety and sanctity, with perfect innocence

and integrity ; so it is implied in all the descriptions of his person and performances : *The sceptre of thy kingdom is a right sceptre : thou lovest righteousness, and hatest iniquity ; wherefore God, even thy God, hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows,* said the Psalmist of him, and, *Righteousness shall be the girdle of his loins, and faithfulness the girdle of his reins,* said Isaiah of him, (denoting the ready disposition of his mind to do whatever was good :) and, *He had done no violence, neither was there any deceit in his lips,* saith the same prophet of him again. Some particular virtues and abilities are also ascribed to him in an eminent degree : excellent wisdom and knowledge in spiritual matters, thus represented by Isaiah : *The spirit of the Lord shall rest upon him, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and fear of the Lord ; and shall make him of quick understanding in the fear of the Lord.* Eloquence also, skill and aptitude to instruct men ; which that most evangelical prophet thus sets forth : *The Lord hath given me the tongue of the learned, that I should know how to speak a word in season to him that is weary.* That he should be meek, and gentle, and compassionate toward men, in regard to their infirmities and afflictions ; mild and lowly in his conversation, the prophets also signify : *He shall, saith Isaiah, feed his flock like a shepherd ; he shall gather the lambs with his arm, and carry them in his bosom, and shall gently lead those that are with young : A bruised reed shall he not break, and the smoking flax shall he not quench :* and, *Behold,* saith Zechariah, *thy King cometh unto*

SERM.
XVII.

Ps. xlv. 6, 7.

Isa. xi. 5.

Isa. liii. 8.

Isa. xi. 2.
liii. 11.

Isa. l. 4.

Isa. xl. 11.

Isa. xlii. 3.
Matt. xii. 20.

Zech. ix. 9.
Matt. xxi. 5.

SERM. *thee ; he is just, and having salvation ; lowly, and*
 XVII. *riding upon an ass.* That he should be of a quiet

Isa. xlii. 2.
 Matt. xii.
 19.

saying of him, (as St. Matthew cites him ;) *He shall not strive, nor cry, neither shall any man hear his voice in the streets.* To his admirable patience in

Isa. liii. 7.

bearing afflictions and contumelies, Isaiah thus renders express testimony ; *He was oppressed, and he was afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth ; he was brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so he openeth not his*

Isa. l. 6.

mouth. And, *I gave my back to the smiter, and my cheeks to them that plucked off the hair : I hid not my face from shame and spitting.* His invin-

Isa. l. 7, 5.

cible courage and resolution in God's service, together with his strong confidence in God and entire submission to God's will, is thus described by the

same prophet : *The Lord God, saith he, will help me ; therefore I shall not be confounded ; therefore have I set my face like a flint, and I know that I shall not be ashamed.—The Lord God hath opened mine ear, and I was not rebellious, neither turned away back.* His general goodness and boundless charity toward men, the nature of his office and design, together with the whole course and tenor of his practice, such as they are represented, do suppose and imply.

Now that Jesus (our Lord) did in his person fully correspond, and did by his practice thoroughly make good this moral high character ; the story of his life with admirable simplicity and sincerity, without any semblance of disguise or artifice, represented by persons who most intimately were acquainted and long

conversed with him, (or by persons immediately in-
formed by them,) and with greatest constancy at-
tested to and maintained by them, doth plainly
shew; wherein his incomparable piety toward God,
his readiness to fulfil all righteousness, his entire
submission and resignation of himself to God's will,
the continual fervency, (devotion of all kinds, prayer,
thanksgiving, fasting, practised in the most intense
degree and in the most reverent manner,) his pure
and ardent zeal for God's glory, his steadfast reso-
lution, and indefatigable industry in God's service,
(making it his meat to do the will of him that sent
him, and to perform his work.)

Wherein an unspotted innocence, not only ex-
empted from the vices and defilements, but raised
above the vanities and impertinences of the world;
secured by a magnanimous contempt, or neglect
and abstinence from all worldly grandeur and splen-
dour; all secular wealth and profit, all bodily delight
and ease, wherein an admirable wisdom and pru-
dence, expressed in all his demeanour and his dis-
course; in his discerning the secret thoughts and
dissembled intentions of men; in his declaring and
defending truth, detecting and confuting errors; in
baffling learned and wily opposers; in eluding cap-
tious questions, and evading treacherous designs; in
not meddling with the secular affairs and interests
of men; in not encumbering himself with the need-
less cares and occupations of this life, nor entangling
himself in the snares of this world; in dexterously
accommodating his behaviour and his speech to the
dispositions, the capacities, the needs of men; to the
circumstances of things and exigencies of occasion,
so as did best conduce to the promoting his great

SERM.
XVII.
Matt. iii. 15.
Heb. x. 7.
John xviii.
11. xii. 27.
Matt. xxvi.
39.
Matt. xiv.
23. xix. 13.
xxi. 22. xi.
25. ix. 14.
Luke vi. 12.
xxii. 32, 41,
42. xxiii. 34.
John xvii.
1, 6, 11, 7.
xi. 41. vi. 11.
John iv. 34.
vi. 31. viii.
29. v. 30.
ix. 4. xv. 10.
xvii. 4.
Matt. viii.
20.
2 Cor. viii. 9.
Luke ii. 40,
52.
Matt. ix. 4.
xii. 10, 25.
xxii. 18.
xvi. 1. xix.
3. xxii. 18,
35, 46.
John viii. 6.
Matt. xxi.
27. xxii. 18.
34.
John vi. 1.
viii. 6. x. 39.
Luke xx. 3.
xxii. 4. xxx.
12, 24.
Matt. xii.
14. xix. 5.
Mark viii.
30.
Luke xii.
14. xiii. 2.
xiv. 7, 12.
xviii. 17.
xix. 11.
John vii. 6.
xvi. 4, 12.
xi. 54. xvi.
27. iv. 10.

SERM. design and undertaking ; so that the people, observ-
 XVII. ing his proceedings, could not but be astonished, and
 Matt. xiii. ask, *Whence hath this man this wisdom?* so that
 54. Mark vii. they could not but acknowledge, *He hath done all*
 37. John xii. 42. *things well.*

vii. 15. 46. Wherein particularly an excellent faculty of speak-
 Mat. vii. 28. ing and teaching, of interpreting and applying the
 Luke ii. 47. holy scriptures, of proving and persuading God's
 iv. 42. truth, whereby he drew the people after him, con-
 John viii. 40. vii. 25, 26, 7. verted many of them to amendment of life, con-
 Luke xx. 46. vinced the most averse and incredulous ; so that *all*
 xiii. 52. xvi. *that heard him were amaxed at his understanding*
 15. Matt. xii. *and answers ; so that all bare witness, and won-*
 14. xv. 13. *dered at the gracious words which proceeded out*
 xxiii. 19. *of his mouth ; so that the officers sent to apprehend*
 xv. 6, 14. him did confess, *Never man spake like this man.*
 viii. 24. Luke ix. 22, 51. xviii. 32.

xxii. 15. Wherein an invincible fortitude and gallantry,
 Matt. xvi. expressed in his most constant profession and un-
 21. xx. 17. daunted maintenance of truth and goodness ; in his
 Mark x. 33. encountering the prejudices, detecting the frauds,
 reproving the vices of the age, though upheld by
 the greatest persons and by prevalent factions ; in
 his plain dealing and free speaking with all sincerity
 and all authority, in his zealous checking and chas-
 tising profane abuses ; in his disregarding the rash
 and fond opinions of men, their spiteful obloquies,
 harsh censures, slanderous imputations, and unjust
 reproaches ; in his foreseeing the greatest of dangers
 and worst of mischiefs that could arrive to man, yet
 cheerfully encountering and firmly sustaining them ;
 sustaining all the violent oppositions and assaults
 which the most virulent malice and envy inflamed
 with superstition and blind zeal could set against
 him.

Wherein a most quiet and peaceable disposition, SERM. XVII.
 apparent from his never attempting any resistance,
 or any revenge upon provocation of frequent great
 affronts and injuries; from his never raising any
 tumults, nor fomenting any quarrels, nor meddling
 with any litigious matters, nor encroaching upon
 any man's right or office; by his ready compliance
 with received customs, by his paying tribute, al-
 though not due from him, to prevent offence; by
 his frequent instructions and exhortations to peace,
 to innocence, to patience, to due obedience, to per-
 forming due respect to superiors, and paying cus-
 toms to governors; to the yielding a docile ear, and
 an observance to those who *sat in Moses's chair*.

Wherein an exceeding meekness and gentleness,
 demonstrated in all his conversation; in resenting
 very moderately, or rather not resenting at all, most
 unjust hatreds, outrageous calumnies, bitter re-
 proaches and contumelies from his adversaries; very
 perverse neglects and ingratitude from multitudes
 of people; many infirmities, stupidities, distrusts,
 basenesses, and treacheries from his own nearest
 friends and followers. In his passing over and
 easily pardoning the greatest offences committed
 against him, yea sometime extenuating and excus-
 ing them. In the mildness of his censures, expos-
 tulations, and reproofs; in his tempering the fierce
 zeal, hard censure, and rigorous proceeding against
 persons unhappy, or faulty; in his tender pity of
 all persons in any want, distress, or trouble; in his
 earnest commiseration and bewailing the vengeance
 he foresaw impendent on his persecutors, and in his
 praying for their pardon.

Wherein a marvellous humility and lowliness of

SERM. mind expressed by his not seeking honour or applause from men, but shunning and rejecting it; his
 XVII. not assuming to himself, but ascribing all to God, and referring all to his glory, by his making no ostentation of his miraculous power and high endowments, but, so far as would comport with the prosecution of his main purpose, (the glory and service of God, the good and welfare of men,) carefully suppressing and concealing them; in his without dissatisfaction or discouragement bearing scorn, and contempt, and obloquy; in his willing condescension to the meanest offices and employments; in his free and familiar conversation with all sorts of people, with the lowest and most despicable, with the worst and most odious, for their good; he not despising the poorest or vilest wretch, who seemed capable of receiving any benefit from him; in his easiness to be entreated, and readiness to comply with the desires of any man imploring succour or relief from him; in his being ready, not only to oblige, but to be obliged and receive courtesies from any man; to answer the invitation of a Pharisee or of a Publican; to accept favourably the well-intended respect of a poor woman; in the softness and sweetness of his language to all men, particularly to his disciples;
Be of good courage, daughter; Son, be of good cheer; I say unto you, my friends; Little children, I am a little while with you. Such was his style and conversation toward his inferiors.

Wherein an unparalleled patience in contentedly and cheerfully, through all the course of his life, undertaking and undergoing whatever by God's will and providence was imposed on him, how grievous and distasteful soever to human apprehension or

sense; the extremest penury, the hardest toil, the vilest disgraces, the most bitter pains and anguishes incident to body or mind, the most horrid and most sorrowful of deaths, all these aggravated by the conscience of his own clearest innocence, by the extreme ingratitude of those who misused him, by the sense of God's displeasure for the sin of man, by all the imbittering considerations which a most lively piety and tender charity suggested; in submitting to all this most freely and most calmly, without any regret, any disturbance.

Wherein an unexpressible and unconceivable charity, (*a charity indeed which surpasseth knowledge*, as St. Paul speaketh,) evidenced in the constant strain and tenor of his whole life, passing through all his designs, all his words, and all his actions: for διήλθεν ἐν ἐργασίᾳ, as St. Peter says in the Acts, he did nothing else, but *go about doing good*, and benefiting men; curing their diseases, relieving their wants, instructing their minds, reforming their manners, drawing them to God and goodness, disposing them to the attainment of everlasting bliss and salvation. It is love, we may observe, which was the soul, that animated and actuated him in all things; which carried him with unwearied resolution and alacrity through all the cruel hardships and toils, through all the dismal crosses and ignominies he endured: his life was in effect but one continual expression of charity, (differently exerting itself according to various opportunities, and circumstances, and needs of men,) the which was consummated, and sealed by his death; the highest instance of charity that could be; for, *Greater love hath no*

SERM.
XVII.

(2 Cor. viii.
9)

Eph. iii. 19.

Acts x. 38.
Matt. iv. 23.
ix. 35.

John xv. 13.

SERM. *man than this, that a man lay down his life for*
XVII. *his friend.*

Wherein, finally, (in which life, I say, of Jesus,) all holiness, all virtue, all goodness (suitable to him, who was to be not only the teacher and the persuader of the best life, but a living standard and pattern thereof; who was to merit of God in man's behalf, to conciliate God's favour towards us, and appease his anger against us) do shine and sparkle with a beauty and a lustre transcending all expression. All which particulars might, were it now proper and seasonable, be thoroughly declared by instances extant in the evangelical history. So that the characteristical qualities of the Messias do clearly and abundantly agree to Jesus our Lord.

His performances should next be considered and compared; but the time doth not admit that we should now proceed any further.

Rev. v. 13. Now, *blessing, and honour, and glory, and power be unto him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb for ever and ever. Amen.*

And in Jesus Christ, &c.

SERMON XVIII.

THAT JESUS IS THE TRUE MESSIAS.

ACTS ix. 22.

But Saul increased the more in strength, and confounded the Jews which dwelt at Damascus, proving that this is the very Christ.

IN conformity to St. Paul's design and practice **SERM. XVIII.** implied here, I have formerly propounded to explain and persuade these particulars. 1. What is the right notion and reason of this name or title, *Christ*. 2. That there was destined to come into the world a Person, who signally, according to that right notion, should be *the Christ*. 3. That Jesus, whom we avow, is that Person, *the very Christ*. 4. In what manner, and upon what accounts, the New Testament representeth Jesus to be *the Christ*. 5. What application the point requireth.

In prosecution of which particulars, having despatched the first and second, I did enter into the third, which is of highest consequence, beginning to declare that Jesus, our Lord, is *the Christ*, from the circumstances of his coming into the world, and from his personal qualifications; which having in

SERM. some measure performed, I shall now proceed to
 XVIII. declare the same from the exact correspondency of his undertakings and performances to those, which, according to ancient presignifications and prophecies, the Messias was designed to undertake and accomplish; together with the consequences of what the Messias was to do, and what answerably Jesus did effect.

1. One great performance of the Messias was, by inspiration and in the name of God, to make a complete discovery of divine truth; to publish a law of universal and perpetual obligation; to institute a religion consummate in all respects, which should correct the faults and supply the defects of all precedent dispensations, which should therefore be, as it were, God's last will and testament, after which no other revelation was to be expected: *I will*, said Deut. xviii. 18, 19. Moses of him, *put words into his mouth; and he shall speak unto them all that I command him; and it shall come to pass, that whoever will not hearken unto my words, which he shall speak in my name, I will require it of him:* by him Isaiah Isa. ii. 3. foretold, that *God shall teach us of his ways, and we shall walk in his paths; for out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of God from Jerusalem:* by him Jeremiah signified, that *God would put his law into the inward parts of men, and write it in their hearts;* it was, as it is said in Daniel, part Jer. xxxi. 33. Ezek. xxxvi. 27. of his work *to bring in everlasting righteousness, and to seal up the vision and prophecy;* and his days in the prophets are commonly styled *the last days*, because, it seemeth, of the perfection of his doctrine, and immutability of his law; where such an entire instruction and final resolution in all points

was commonly expected by the Jews, as the Samaritan woman did intimate; *I know*, said she, according to the current persuasion then, *that the Messias cometh; and when he shall come, he will tell us all things.* SERM. XVIII.
John iv. 25.

Now accordingly Jesus (*our hope*, and *author of our faith*) hath taught a doctrine, hath proclaimed a law, hath instituted a religion, which upon strict and careful examination will be found most perfect in all respects; such in its nature as cannot but indispensably oblige all that understand it; such as is worthy of God, and suitable to his designs of glorifying himself, and obliging his creature; in short, he hath been author of such an institution, as may be demonstrated the most excellent and complete that can be. For (briefly to shew this by considering the main, if not all imaginable excellencies of any religion, law, or doctrine) it is impossible that any doctrine should assign a more true, proper, complete notion or character of God himself, more congruous to what reason dictateth, the works of nature declare, the purest tradition attesteth, or common experience doth intimate concerning God; more apt to breed in our hearts the highest affection and reverence toward him, or to engage us in the strictest practice of duty and obedience to him; none can ascribe unto God higher perfections of nature, can more assert unto him all his due rights and prerogatives, can better commend and justify to us all his actions and proceedings, can represent him more amiable in his goodness, more terrible in his justice, more glorious and venerable in all his ways of providence; can consequently better direct or dispose us to render unto him a worship worthy of him and

SERM. acceptable to him; can also therefore with more se-
XVIII. curity and advantage commend unto us the imitation of him in our disposition and demeanour.

Nor could any doctrine more clearly and fully inform us concerning ourselves; concerning our nature, our original, our end, all our state, past, present, final; what the dignity of our nature is, for what purposes we were designed and framed, wherein our happiness doth consist, what shall be our state after death, how we shall be judged and dealt with then; the knowledge of which particulars is of so immense consequence, for the satisfaction of our minds and direction of our lives; concerning which therefore men in all times have so earnestly inquired and disputed, without any sure resolution but from hence.

Nor could a more accurate rule of life (more congruous to reason and suitable to our nature, or perfective thereof; more conducive to our welfare and our content; more apt to procure each man's private good, and to promote the public benefit of all) have been prescribed; nothing can be more just, or comely, or pleasant, or beneficial to us, than are the duties of piety (consisting in love, reverence, gratitude, devotion, obedience, faith and repentance toward God) which Christianity doth require. No directions concerning our deportment toward our neighbours and brethren can be imagined comparable to those (those of hearty love, good-will, beneficence, compassion, readiness to forgive, meekness, peaceableness, and the like) which the Christian law enjoineth. No precepts or advices concerning the management of ourselves (the ordering our souls and our bodies in their respective functions and frui-

tions) can be devised more agreeable to sound reason, more productive of true welfare and real delight unto us, than are those of being humble and modest in our conceits, calm and composed in our passions, sober and temperate in our enjoyments, patient and contented in our state, with the like, which the Christian doctrine doth inculcate. No other method can raise us up so near to heaven and happiness as that which we here learn, of abstracting and elevating our minds above the fading glories, the unstable possessions, the vanishing delights of this world; the fixing our thoughts, affections, and hopes upon the concernments of a better future state.

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XVIII.

No religion also can be purer from superstitious alloys, or freer from useless encumbrances, (or from, as Tertullian calleth them, *busy scrupulosities*,) than is this, (such as it is in its native simplicity, and as it came from its Author, before the pragmatical curiosity, or domineering humour, or covetous designs of men had tampered with it,) it only requiring a rational and spiritual service, consisting in performance of substantial duties plainly necessary or profitable; the ritual observances it enjoineth being, as very few in number, in nature simple and easy to observe, so evidently reasonable, very decent and very useful, able to instruct us in, apt to excite us to, the practice of most wholesome duties.

Negotiosæ
scrupulosi-
tates. Tert.
in Marc.
lib. ii.

No religion also can have the like advantage of setting before us a living copy and visible standard of good practice, affording so compendious an instruction, and so efficacious an incitement to all piety and virtue: so absolutely perfect, so purposely designed, so fitly accommodated for our imitation, and withal so strongly engaging us thereto, as the

SERM. XVIII. example of Jesus our Lord, such as it is in the Gospels represented to us.

Neither can any religion build our duty upon more solid grounds, or draw it from better principles, or drive it to better ends, or press it with more valid inducements than ours; which builds it upon conformity to the perfect nature of God, and to the dictates of his infallible wisdom, upon the holy will and most just authority of our natural Lord and Maker; which draweth it from love, reverence, and gratitude to God, from a hearty good-will to men, and from a sober regard to our own true welfare; which propoundeth God's honour, our neighbour's edification, and our own salvation, as the principal ends of action; which stirreth up good practice by minding us, that we shall thereby resemble God, express our thankfulness, and discharge our duty to him, obtain his mercy and favour, acquire present comfort of mind and future bliss, avoid regrets of conscience here, and endless torments hereafter.

Neither can any doctrine afford more encouragements to the endeavours of practising it than doth this, which tendereth sufficient help and ability toward the performance of whatever it enjoineth; offering (upon our seeking them or asking for them) God's infallible wisdom to direct us in our darkneses and doubts, God's almighty strength to assist us in our temptations and combats, God's loving spirit to comfort us in our afflictions and distresses.

Nor can any doctrine in a more sure or kindly manner appease and satisfy a man's conscience, so as to produce therein a well-grounded hope and solid comfort; to heal the wounds of bitter remorse and anxious fear, which the sense of guilt doth in-

flict, than doth this, which assureth us, that God Almighty, notwithstanding all our offences committed against him, is not only reconcilable to us, but desirous to become our friend; that he doth upon our repentance, and compliance with his gentle terms, receive us unto perfect grace and favour, discharging all our guilts and debts, however contracted; that our endeavours to serve and please God, although imperfect and defective, if serious and sincere, shall be accepted and rewarded by him.

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Such is the doctrine, law, and religion of Jesus; expressed in a most unaffected and perspicuous way, with all the gravity and simplicity of speech, with all the majesty and authority of proposal becoming divine truth; so excellent, and so complete in all respects, that it is beyond the imagination of man to conceive any thing better, yea, I dare say, repugnant to the nature of things that there should be any other way of religion (different substantially from it) so very good. God himself, we may presume to say, cannot infuse truer notions concerning himself or concerning us, cannot reveal more noble or more useful truths; cannot prescribe better laws or rules, cannot afford more proper means and aids, cannot propound more equal and reasonable terms, cannot offer higher encouragements and rewards, cannot discover his mind in a more excellent way than he hath done by Jesus, for his own glory and service, for our benefit and happiness: so that hence we may reasonably infer, that the doctrine taught, the law promulgated, the religion instituted by Jesus in God's name, are the very same which the predictions concerning the Messiah do refer unto, as

SERM. XVIII. the last which should ever come from God, most full and perfect, universally and perpetually obliging.

2. Thus in general the prophets spake concerning the Messias's doctrine, and so that of Jesus correspondeth thereto : but of that doctrine particularly it was signified, that it should be very comfortable, joyful, and acceptable to mankind ; as containing a declaration (peculiar thereto) of God's kind and gracious intentions toward us, overtures of especial mercy and love, dispensations of all sorts of spiritual blessings ; the pardon and abolition of sins committed, peace and satisfaction of conscience, deliverance from spiritual slaveries and captivities ; *Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion ; shout, O daughter of Jerusalem : behold, thy King cometh unto thee :* so Zechariah speaketh of his coming, and implieth the joyful purport of his message : and, *How beautiful*, saith Isaiah, *upon the mountains are the feet of him that bringeth good tidings, that publisheth peace ; that bringeth good tidings of good, that publisheth salvation ; that saith unto Zion, Thy God reigneth !* and, *The Spirit of the Lord is upon me ; because the Lord hath anointed me to preach good tidings to the meek ; he hath sent me to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound ; to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord, and the day of vengeance, or of recompense, as the LXX. render it, of our God ; to comfort all that mourn ; to give unto them that mourn in Zion beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness.* It is a part of what God in Jeremiah promised to dispense by him ; *I will forgive their iniquity, and I*

Zech. ix. 9.

Isa. lii. 7.

Isa. lxi. 1.
xlii. 1, 3.

ἀνταποδό-
σεις.

Jer. xxxi.
34.

will remember their sin no more. It is one of the SERM. XVIII.
Messias's performances, to finish transgression, and
to make an end of sins, and to make reconcilia- Dan. ix. 24.
tion for iniquity ; to sprinkle clean water on God's Ezek. xxxvi. 25,
people, and to save them from their uncleanness. 29.
 In fine, the prophet Zechariah saith of his time, that Isa. xlv. 3.
in that day there shall be a fountain opened to the xliii. 25.
house of David and to the inhabitants of Jerusa- Zech. xiii.
lem for sin and for uncleanness.

Now to all this the preaching of Jesus did exactly correspond ; it being indeed, as it was named, a gospel, or message of good and joy ; declaring the special good-will of God, and his merciful willingness to be reconciled to mankind ; offering peace and pardon to all that are sensible of their guilt, and penitent for their sin ; imparting rest, comfort, and liberty to all that are weary and afflicted with spiritual burdens, grievances, and slaveries ; taking off all grievous yokes of superstition, servility, and sin ; and in their stead imposing a no less sweet and pleasant, than just and reasonable obedience ; ministering all sorts of blessings needful for our succour, relief, ease, Acts xv. 32.
 content, and welfare ; wholly breathing sweetest love, Rom. v. 13.
 (all kinds of love ; love between God and man, be- Rom. xiv. 17.
 tween man and man, between man and his own Gal. v. 22.
 conscience ;) filling the hearts of those who sincerely embrace and comply with it, with present joy, and raising in them gladsome hopes of future bliss. It was indeed the most joyous sound that ever entered into man's ears, the most welcome news that ever was reported upon earth ; news of a certain and perfect salvation from all the enemies of our welfare, from all the causes of mischief and misery to us ; well therefore deserving that auspicious gratulation

SERM. from the angel—*Behold, I bring you tidings of*
 XVIII. *great joy, which shall be to all people.*

Luke ii. 10. 3. Collateral unto, or coincident with, those performances, (the teaching such a doctrine, publishing such a law, dispensing such blessings,) was the formal institution and establishment of a new, everlasting covenant, (different from all precedent covenants, and swallowing them up in its perfection,) a covenant between God and man, wherein God, entering into a most strict alliance and relation with us, should be pleased to dispense the blessings of spiritual illumination and assistance, of mercy and favour, of salvation and felicity; wherein we in way of condition, according to obligations of justice and gratitude, should engage to return unto God by hearty repentance, and to persist in faithful obedience to him: of such a covenant the Messias was to be the messenger and mediator, or *the angel* thereof, (as the prophet Malachi speaketh, alluding, it seems, to that angel of God's presence, who ordained the Jewish law, and conducted the Israelites toward the promised land;) of which covenant and its mediator, God in Isaiah thus spake: *I the Lord have called thee in righteousness, and I will hold thine hand, and I will keep thee, and give thee for a covenant of the people, for a light of the Gentiles; to open the blind eyes, to bring out the prisoners from the prison, and them that sit in darkness out of the prison-house:* and of the same he again; *Incline your ear, and come unto me; hear, and your soul shall live; and I will make an everlasting covenant with you, even the sure mercies of David—Behold, I have given him a witness to the people, a leader and commander to the people:* so in general he speaketh

Ἀγγέλως
 τῆς διαθή-
 κης.

Mal. iii. 1.

Exod. xxiii.

10.

Isa. lxiii. 9.

Actsvii. 35.

38, 53.

Gal. iii. 19.

Isa. xlii. 6,

7.

xlix. 8. lv.

3.

Isa. lv. 3,

4.

thereof, and inviteth thereto: then a special part SERM.
thereof he expresseth thus; *Let the wicked man* XVIII.
forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his Isa. lv. 7.
thoughts; and let him return unto the Lord, and
he will have mercy upon him; and to our God,
and he will abundantly pardon. Of the same co-
venant God in Ezekiel speaketh thus; *I will set up* Ezek.
one shepherd over them—and I will make with them xxxiv. 23.
a covenant of peace, and it shall be an everlasting 25. xxxvii.
covenant with them—and I will set my sanctuary 26. xxxvi.
in the midst of them for evermore—they shall also 26, &c.
walk in my judgments, and observe my statutes,
and do them. Of the same, God thus declareth in
Jeremiah, most fully and plainly reckoning the par-
ticular blessings tendered therein: *Behold, the days* Jer. xxxi.
come, saith the Lord, that I will make a new cove- 31, &c.
nant with the house of Israel, and the house of Ju-
dah; not according to the covenant that I made
with their fathers in the day that I took them by
the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt
—but this shall be the covenant that I will make
with the house of Israel; After those days, saith
the Lord, I will put my law into their inward parts,
and write it in their hearts; and I will be their
God, and they shall be my people: and they shall
teach no more every man his brother, saying, Know
the Lord; for they shall all know me, from the
least of them unto the greatest, saith the Lord; for
I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember
their sin no more: which words signify the tenor of
that covenant on God's part to import, that God
would impart a full and clear discovery of his will
unto them, whom it should concern; that he would
afford to them all requisite means and helps, quali-

SERM. XVIII. fying them for the performance of their duty ; that he would bestow on them (complying with the terms of this covenant, and performing their duty) an entire remission of all their sins, with an assurance of his constant and perpetual favour.

Now that Jesus did institute such a covenant, wherein all the benefits promised on God's part, and all the duties required on our parts, do punctually correspond to the terms of that predesigned by the prophets, is apparent by the whole tenor of the Christian gospel ; wherein a full declaration of God's will is held forth, so that no man (except out of wilfulness or negligence) can be ignorant thereof ; wherein, upon condition of faith and repentance, God's mercy and pardon are exhibited and offered to all ; wherein the communication of God's holy Spirit of grace (for directing and assisting the embracers of this covenant in the practice of their duty) is promised and dispensed ; wherein on our part faith in God (or heartily returning to him) and faithful observance of God's laws are required ; wherein God declareth a most favourable regard and love (together with very near and endearing relations) to those who undertake and conform to his terms ; of which new covenant Jesus is represented the Angel, the Mediator, the Sponsor ; having by his preaching declared it, by his merits and intercessions purchased and procured it, by his blood ratified and assured it to us.

4. In coincidence also with those performances, it is declared that the Messias should erect a kingdom spiritual in nature, universal in extent, and perpetual in duration ; by the power and virtue whereof the enemies of God's people should be curbed and quel-

led; the subjects of which should live together in amity and peace, in safety and prosperity; wherein truth and righteousness should gloriously flourish. The chief testimonies of ancient scripture predicting this kingdom I had occasion before to mention, and shall not repeat them now; only concerning the nature and extent thereof I shall add somewhat, serving for illustration and proof of our main purpose.

That it was to be a spiritual kingdom (not a visible dominion over the bodies and estates of men, managed by external force and co-action, but a government of men's hearts and consciences by secret inspirations, and moral instructions or persuasions) may be several ways collected and argued: it appeareth from the temper and disposition of its Founder, who was to be *a Prince of Peace*; of a peaceable, meek, patient, and humble disposition: it may be inferred from his condition, which was not to be a state of external grandeur and magnificence, but of poverty and affliction; for he was to be as he is described, mean and despicable in appearance; having *no form or comeliness, no beauty*, that when we should see him, we should desire him; being *a man of sorrow, and acquainted with grief*: it also followeth from the events happening to him, which were not to conquer and triumph openly in view of carnal eyes; but to be *despised* and rejected, to be afflicted, oppressed, and slaughtered by men; the same we may learn from the manner of its establishment and propagation; which was not to be effected by force and violence, but by virtue of a quiet and gentle instruction; by reasonable words, not by hard blows: so doth the prophet signify, when he saith of the Messias, that, *with right-*

SERM.
XVIII.

Isa. ix. 6.

Isa. liii. 2,
3, 4, 7. xlix.
7. 1. 6.

Isa. xi. 4.

SERM.
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eousness shall he judge the poor, and reprove with equity for the meek of the earth; and he shall smite the earth with the rod of his mouth, and with the breath of his lips he shall slay the wicked: not by force of hands, or terror of arms, not in furious and bloody combats, but by the spiritual rod of his mouth, with the soft breath of his lips he was to slay the wicked, converting them unto righteousness:

Dan. ii. 44, 45. *so doth Daniel also imply when he saith, that a stone cut out of the mountains without hands should break in pieces and consume all other kingdoms. Yea the nature thereof itself doth argue the same; for the laws enjoined and duties required, the blessings ministered and rewards propounded therein are purely spiritual, not relating to a temporal state, yea hardly consisting with secular domination; as may appear by attending to its fundamental constitution, or to the covenant settled between the Prince and subjects thereof; wherein the divine spirit and grace, light and knowledge, mercy and pardon for sins, comfort of mind, and peace of conscience, God's especial love and favour, things merely spiritual, are expressly promised; but worldly power, wealth, and prosperity are pretermitted; and thence may justly be presumed no ingredients or appurtenances thereof. Indeed the constitution of a temporal or worldly kingdom, with visible pomp and lustre, such as the Jews (a grossly conceited and sensually affected people) did, mistaking the prophets, desire and expect, had been a thing, as very agreeable to the carnal or childish opinions of men, so in reasonable esteem of no considerable value, benefit, or use to mankind: such a domination could only have concerned the mortal part and temporal state of man;*

it could only have procured some trivial conveniences for our bodies, or gratifications to our sense : the settlement also, and preservation of such a kingdom (according to that vast extent and long duration which the prophets imply) seemeth, without quite altering the whole frame of human nature, scarce possible ; and reasons there are obvious enough, why it would not be expedient or beneficial for men : but the founding and upholding a spiritual kingdom (such as we described) is evidently of inestimable benefit to the nobler and more divine part of men ; may serve to promote the eternal welfare of our souls ; may easily, without changing the natural appetites of men, or disturbing the world, be carried on any where, and subsist for ever by the occult influences of divine grace ; it consequently is most worthy of God to design and accomplish. Such a kingdom therefore was meant by the prophets, being indeed no other than a church, or society of persons, with unanimous consent heartily acknowledging the one true God of Israel, Maker of heaven and earth, for their Sovereign Prince and Lawgiver ; submitting themselves in all their actions to his laws and commands, expecting protection and recompense of their obedience from him.

As for the general extent of this kingdom, and the Messias's proceedings in settling and propagating it, that is also very perspicuously and copiously represented in the ancient prophets, who declare that by him mankind (then immersed in deep ignorance and error, in wretched impiety and wickedness, in utter estrangement and aversion from God and goodness) should be reduced to the knowledge, worship, and obedience of God ; that they should be

SERM. received into God's protection, and should partake
 XVIII. of his special favour ; that all nations of men should
 by the Messiah be enlightened with saving know-
 ledge, and converted to the practice of true right-
 eousness ; that all men every where (all that would
 regard and observe his word, all in God's design and
 desire, in effect a numerous company of men) should
 by his means be aggregated to God's church, and
 rendered God's people ; enjoying the benefits and
 privileges suitable to that state or relation : in ex-
 pressing these things the ancient scriptures are very
 pregnant and copious : Moses, in that most divine
 song (endited by God himself, and uttered in his
 name) which seemeth to contain the history and the
 continual fate of the Jewish people, doth foretell
 this, and concludeth his song therewith ; as with
 the last matter, which should happen during God's
 special relation to that people, importing the period
 of Judaism, or of the Israelitish theocracy. *Rejoice,*
 saith he, *O ye nations, with his people.* God in the
 second Psalm thus speaketh to the Messiah : *Ask of*
me, and I will give thee the heathen for thine in-
heritance, and the utmost parts of the earth for
thy possession : and in the 72d Psalm ; *His name,*
 it is said, *shall endure for ever ; his name shall be*
continued as long as the sun ; and men shall be
blessed in him ; all nations shall call him blessed ;
he shall have dominion also from sea to sea, and
from the river to the ends of the earth : and other-
 where ; *All the ends of the earth shall remember*
and turn unto the Lord ; and all the kindreds of
the nations shall worship before thee : and, *I will,*
 saith God in Isaiah concerning him, *give thee for a*
light to the Gentiles, that thou mayest be my salva-

Deut. xxxii.

43.

Rom. xv.

10.

Psal. ii. 8.

Ps. lxxii. 17.
viii. 1.

Psal. xxii.

27. lxxxvi.

9.

Isa. xli. 9.

Acts xiii.

47.

tion to the ends of the earth: and, *The glory of the Lord shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together; for the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it: The Lord hath made bare his holy arm in the eyes of all nations; and all the ends of the earth shall see the salvation of our God: and, He shall not fail nor be discouraged, till he have set judgment in the earth; and the isles (that is, the European nations) shall wait for his law: and, In this mountain shall the Lord of hosts make unto all people a feast of fat things, a feast of wine on the lees, of fat things full of marrow, of wine on the lees well refined; and he will destroy in this mountain the face of the covering cast over all people, and the veil that is spread over all nations: and, In that day there shall be a root of Jesse, which shall stand for an ensign of the people; to it shall the Gentiles seek; and its rest shall be glorious: and, I am sought of them that asked not for me; I am found of them that sought me not; I said, Behold me, behold me, unto a nation that was not called by my name: and, It shall come to pass in the last days, say both Isaiah and Micah in the same words, that the mountain of the Lord's house shall be established in the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills, and all nations shall flow unto it: and, From the rising of the sun, saith God in Malachi, even unto the going down of the same, my name shall be great among the Gentiles; and in every place incense shall be offered unto my name, and a pure offering: and, I, saith God in Hosea, will have mercy upon her that had not obtained mercy; and I will say unto them which were not my people, Thou art my people;*

SERM.
XVIII.

Isa. xl. 5.

Is. lii. 10.

Luke iii. 6.

Isa. xlii. 4.

Rom. xv. 2.

Isa. xxv. 6,

Isa. xi. 10.

Isa. lxxv. 1.

Rom. ix.

24.

Isa. ii. 2.

Mic. iv. 1.

Mal. i. 11.

Hos. ii. 23.

i. 10.

Rom. ix.

26, 25.

SERM. XVIII. *and they shall say, Thou art my God: in the place where it was said unto them, Ye are not my peo-*

Isa. lx. 5. *ple, it shall be said unto them, Ye are the sons of the living God: and, The abundance of the sea shall be converted unto thee, saith God to his church; the forces of the Gentiles shall come unto thee:*

¹Isa. xliii. 5, 6. *Fear not, for I am with thee; I will bring thy seed from the east, and gather thee from the west; I will say to the north, Give up; and to the south,*

Isa. liv. 1—*Keep not back; bring my sons from far, and my daughters from the ends of the earth: and, Sing,*

⁵Gal. iv. 27. *O barren, thou that didst not bear, it is said to the Gentile church; break forth into singing, and cry aloud, thou that didst not travail with child;*

Vide Amos ix. 11, 12. *for more are the children of the desolate than the children of the married wife, saith the Lord: En-*
Acts xv. 15, &c. *large the place of thy tent, and let them stretch*

forth the curtains of thine habitations—for thou shalt break forth on the right hand and on the left; and thy seed shall inherit the Gentiles—for thy Maker is thine husband, (the Lord of hosts is his name;) and thy Redeemer the Holy One of

Is. xxxv. 1. *Israel; The Lord of the whole earth shall be called—The wilderness and the solitary place shall be glad for them; the desert shall rejoice, and blossom as the rose, &c.*

Such is the nature and such the extent of the Messias's kingdom; now that Jesus hath erected and settled a kingdom of a spiritual and heavenly nature, (the which is therefore in his gospel styled the *kingdom of heaven*, the *kingdom of God*, the *kingdom of Christ*, the *kingdom that was to come*,) whereof God is the absolute Sovereign; the throne whereof is in heaven above, which beareth sway in

the souls of men ; wherein God governeth in effectual manner, (most righteously and sweetly, with admirable wisdom, justice, and clemency ; with mighty power also, and awful authority,) according to most excellent laws, by his holy word, and powerful spirit ; proposing most precious rewards to the obedient subjects thereof, and threatening dreadful punishments to the rebellious ; protecting and saving the faithful people from all their enemies, (from the powers of darkness, from the temptations, allurements, menaces of the flesh and the world here, from death and hell hereafter ;) that also Jesus (who, as Mediator between God and man, doth according to the gospel, by authority derived from God, and in God's name, administer the government hereof) hath in effect been avowed as Lord and King ; that his authority hath had great efficacy upon the minds and consciences of men ; what noble trophies over sin and wickedness his word hath raised ; in what glory and majesty through many ages he hath reigned, is evident from obvious records of history and from plain experience.

The extent of this spiritual empire raised by our Lord (of that doctrine which he taught, of that reformation which he introduced, of that church, or spiritual society, knit together in faith and charity, which he founded, of that whole dispensation which he managed) is also thoroughly commensurate to the extent of whatever in these kinds the Messias was to achieve : the empire of Jesus in its nature and design, according to right and obligation, is declared universal and boundless, coextended with the world itself, and comprehending all generations of men ; all nations being summoned to come under the

SERM. XVIII. wings of its jurisdiction ; all persons being invited to partake the benefits, and enjoy the privileges thereof: *The Lord, and Judge of all men ; the Saviour, and Redeemer of the world ; the common light of men, and Captain of human life ;* are titles, which Jesus assumed to himself: *All things are delivered to me of my Father ; Thou hast given him power over all flesh ; All judgment is committed to the Son ; yea, All power is given unto me in heaven and earth*—such is the authority he claimeth and asserteth to himself: *Going into the world, preach the gospel to every creature ; Go, and discipline all nations, baptizing them*—such was the commission and charge delivered by Jesus to his officers and ministers : *The grace of God which bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men ; The times of ignorance God having winked at, doth now invite all men every where to repent ; God was in Christ reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their sins ; God our Saviour will have all men to be saved, and to come to the acknowledgment of the truth ; The gospel hath been preached to every creature under heaven*—so do the apostles declare the latitude of the evangelical dispensation according to its nature and design : so that well may we cry out with Clemens Alexandrinus, *Hearken ye that are afar off, hearken ye that are near ; the word is not hid from any, it is a common light, it shineth to all men ; there is no Cimmerian in respect to the gospel.* So in design and of right is Jesus's doctrine and dispensation common to all nations and to all persons ; all in duty are obliged to entertain it ; all may have the benefit thereof, who are fit and willing to embrace it ; it doth not indeed obtrude its benefits

Ἀκούσατε
οὗτοι οἱ μακ-
ρὰν, ἀκούσα-
τε οἱ ἱγγύς·
οὐκ ἀπὸ κρύβη-
τινός ἐστι λόγος·
ὡς ἐστὶ κοι-
νόν, ἡμεῖς ἀν-
τιπᾶσι
ἅπασιν·
οὐδεὶς Κιμμή-
ριος ἐν λόγῳ.
Clem. Al.
Protrept.

upon unwilling, and thence unworthy persons; it useth no unkindly violence, or rude compulsion; but it alloweth, it inviteth, it entreateth, it engageth all men to come, excluding only those from a participation therein, who will not hear its call; who do not like or love it. SERM.
XVIII.

In effect also this kingdom hath been very large and vast, a considerable part of the world having very soon been subjugated by its virtue, and having submitted thereto. *As the lightning cometh out of the east, and shineth even unto the west, so shall the coming (or presence) of the Son of man be*; said he concerning the sudden and effectual spreading of his doctrine; and the event answered his prediction: for the evangelical light did in an instant dart itself all about, so as in many places to dispel the night of ignorance, and to dissipate the fogs of wickedness: so that *the utmost ends of the earth* (of which according to the most literal sense we ourselves are a most proper instance) are come under the possession and government of Jesus; are reduced to the acknowledgment and veneration of the only true God; do partake of God's favour, and hope in his mercy; do with good conscience (in that measure which is expectable from the natural infirmity and pravity of man, in various degrees, some more, some less strictly) serve God, and obey his laws: a church, and spiritual Zion, (spread over divers regions and countries, consisting of several nations and languages,) compacted in good order and sweet communion, hath through a long course of time visibly flourished in competent degrees of peace, prosperity, and glory; commending and cherishing true religion, charity, and sobriety; offering continual sacrifices of holy de-

Chrys.
tom. vi. Or.
61. p. 634.

SERM. XVIII. votion unto God, celebrating the divine name and praises; producing many noble examples of all piety and virtue; a church in all regards adequate to the prophetical expressions concerning that which was out of the whole world to be collected and constituted by the Messias.

5. If we do singly compare the particular consequences and successes of the Messias's performances, expressed by the prophets; we shall find an exact correspondence to what hath followed the undertakings and performances of our Lord.

They tell us, that great opposition should be made against it by the Jews and by the* Gen-
tiles.

* Psal. ii. 1.
Vid. Chrys.
tom. vi.
Or. 61. p.
657.
Ps. lxxii.
11, 17.

They tell us, that the Messias's person should be acknowledged, worshipped, and blessed all over the world; *All nations*, say they, *shall serve him,—all nations shall call him blessed*: this we see for almost seventeen hundred years abundantly performed in respect to Jesus, by the daily services of praise and thanksgiving yielded to him in the universal church.

They say, that the knowledge of God shall be far extended and diffused over the world; *The earth*, say they, *shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea*: this we see fulfilled by the large propagation of Christian doctrine.

They affirm, that righteousness in the times of the Messias should commonly prosper, and be in high request, according to that; *In his days shall the righteous flourish*: so we see, that virtue and piety have, ever since Jesus commended them to the world, enjoyed much repute; having been practised among the professors of his religion in such degrees,

Isa. xi. 9.
Ps lxxii. 7.

and according to such manner, as the condition of SERM.
this world, the humours of men, and the nature of XVIII.
human affairs, do admit; nor reasonably can any
prophecies be understood to mean further.

They further intimate, that upon the entertain-
ment of the Messias's doctrine and law, abundance
of peace and concord, of love and charity, of inno-
cence and justice, should ensue; so that the fellow-
subjects of this kingdom, although of different states
and complexions, (*the wolf and the lamb, the leo-* Ps. lxxii. 7.
pard and the kid, the lion and the ox, the asp and lxxxv. 10.
the young child; that is, the rich and the poor, Isa. xi. 6.
lxv. 25. ii.
4. lxvi. 12.
the mighty and the weak, the fierce and the gentle,
the crafty and the simple sorts of men,) should live
and converse together amicably, safely, and pleasant-
ly, without molesting, wronging, oppressing, and de-
vouring; but rather helping and benefiting each
other; *They shall not*, saith the prophet, *hurt or* Isa. xi. 5.
destroy in all my holy mountain: to the making lxv. 25.
good of which particular, the doctrine of Jesus doth
temper and compose the minds of those who do truly
understand and embrace it: such as are Christians
indeed (careful followers of Jesus's rules and ex-
ample) are thereby disposed to maintain peace and
amity between themselves, yea to perform all offices
of charity and kindness to one another, although
their conditions in the world, their complexions, their
endowments and abilities be however different; for
the Christian doctrine representeth all that embrace
it as fellow-servants of the same Lord, as brethren
and children of the same Father, as members of the
same body, as objects of the same divine regard and
love, as partakers of the same privileges, professors
of the same truth, consorts of the same hope, coheirs

SERM. of the same glory and happiness, as thence united
XVIII. and allied to one another by the strictest bands and

most endearing relations; hence it suppléth the stoutest heart, and sweeteneth the fiercest tempers; it inclineth persons of highest state, power, wealth, knowledge, to condescensive humility and meekness toward the meanest; this reason presently occurring to every Christian mind, that no Christian brother is indeed contemptible, can without folly, may without sin be contemned: whence although Jesus's doctrine hath not quite removed wars and contentions out of the world, yea not out of that part thereof which doth acknowledge him, (for that were a thing impossible, without a total alteration of human nature, or rooting out of it those appetites of pride, voluptuousness, self-love, and covetousness, which are the seeds of strife; the effecting which it cannot be supposed that the prophets did intend,) yet hath it done considerably toward it; it hath disposed many persons (many great and considerable in the world) to a very just, innocent, and peaceable conversation; it hath kindled ardent love and compassion toward all mankind in many hearts; it hath produced great fruits of charity and bounty in persons of all sorts; it hath had no small influence upon the common state of things, causing human affairs to be managed with much equity and gentleness, restraining outrageous iniquity and oppression.

It was also further particularly foretold, that great princes and potentates should submit to the Messias, seriously avowing his authority over them, yielding veneration to his name, and obedience to his laws; with their power and wealth promoting and encouraging the religion instituted by him, defending and

cherishing his faithful people : *All kings*, said the SERM. XVIII.
 Psalmist of him, *shall fall before him ; all nations*
shall do him service ; To a servant of rulers, said Ps. lxxii. 11.
 Isaiah also of him, *kings shall see and arise, princes* Is. xlix. 7,
also shall do worship : and the same prophet con- 23. lii. 15.
 cerning his church ; *Kings*, saith he, *shall be thy* Is. lx. 3, 10,
nursing fathers, and queens thy nursing mothers ; 16.
they shall bow down to thee with their face toward
the earth, and lick up the dust of thy feet : *The Gen-*
tiles shall come to thy light, and kings to the bright-
ness of thy rising ;—The sons of strangers shall
build up thy walls, and their kings shall minister
unto thee ;—Thou shalt suck the milk of the Gen-
tiles, and shalt suck the breasts of kings ;—The Is. lxii. 2.
Gentiles shall see thy righteousness, and all kings
thy glory. All this we see plainly to have been ac-
 complished, for that soon the highest of earthly
 powers did submit and stoop thereto ; that many
 great-princes (great and glorious as even the world
 hath known any ; such as Constantine, Theodosius,
 Charlemagne, and others of like illustrious renown)
 have willingly entertained Jesus's doctrine, and
 gladly undergone his yoke ; that long successions of
 emperors and kings through the best frequented and
 most civilized part of the world have seriously pro-
 fessed themselves the subjects and servants of Jesus ;
 expressing humble adoration of his person, and yield-
 ing observance to his laws ; maintaining the profes-
 sion of his religion by their power, supporting the
 ministers of it by their bounty, cherishing the prac-
 tice thereof by manifold helps and encouragements ;
 they have seemed ambitious of titles drawn from

^a Οὐ γὰρ ἀρνησαίμην αὐν, ἐφ' ᾧ μάλιστα χαίρω συνθεράπων ὑμέτερος
 τεφικέναι. Const. apud Eus. de Vit. Const. iii.

SERM. performances of this nature, affecting and glorifying
XVIII. to be styled, *Most Christian Kings, Catholic Kings, Defenders of the Faith, and Sons of the Church.*

It was also to be a particular consequence of what the Messias should do, that by virtue of his performances idolatry (that is, the worship of wicked spirits, or of fictitious deities) should in a conspicuous manner be vanquished, driven away, and destroyed; the worship of the only true God being substituted in its room: *The Lord alone*, saith Isaiah concerning his times, *shall be exalted in that day, and the idols he shall utterly abolish*: and, *It shall come to pass*, saith Zechariah, *in that day, saith the Lord of hosts, I will cut off the name of the idols out of the land, and they shall be no more remembered; and also I will cause the prophets, and the unclean spirits to pass out of the land.* Now this we know was soon effected by the doctrine of our Lord, in a most remarkable manner: idolatry, in all places where it came, did flee and vanish before it; the Devil's frauds (whereby he so long had abused and befooled mankind) being detected, and that authority which he had usurped over the world, being utterly disavowed; all the pack of infernal apostate spirits being not only rejected and disclaimed, but scorned and detested. Jesus (as the gospel telleth us, and as experience confirmeth) did combat the *strong one*, did baffle and bind him; he disarmed and rifled him; he triumphed over him, and exposed him to shame; he cast him out, and dissolved all his works. At the appearance of Jesus's doctrine, and the sound of his name, his altars were deserted,

Isa. ii. 17,
18.

Ezek.

xxxvi. 25.

Zech. xiii.

2.

John xii. 31.

xvi. 11.

Eph. ii. 2.

2 Cor. iv. 8.

Col. i. 13.

Acts xxvi.

18.

Matt. xii.

29.

Luke xi. 21.

Col. ii. 15.

John xii.

31. xvi. 11.

1 John iii. 8.

Ἐγὼ ὁ συνθεράπων ὑμέτερος καθ' ὑπερβολὴν εἶναι χαίρων. Const. apud Socr. i. 9. in Epist. ad Eccl. Alexandr.

his temples fell down, his oracles were struck dumb, SERM. XVIII.
his arts were supplanted, all his worship and king-
dom were quite subverted. The sottish adoration
of creatures (by the suggestion also of Satan, and
by man's vain fancy advanced to a participation of
divine honour) was also presently banished, and
thrown away; the only true God (the Maker and
Lord of all things) being thenceforth acknowledged
and adored as the only fountain of good, and the
sole object of worship.

Again, whereas in regard to all these perform-
ances the state of things constituted by the Messiah Καὶρὸς διορ-
θώσεως.
is described so different from the former state of Heb. ix. 10.
mankind, that it is called the creation of a new
world: *For behold*, saith God in Isaiah concerning Isa. lxxv. 17.
lxxvi. 22.
the Messiah's times, *I create new heavens and a* xliii. 18.
new earth, and the former shall not be remembered,
nor come into mind, (whence the Jews commonly
before our Lord's time were used to call the Mes-
siah's time, *the world to come, the future age*;) it is Οἰκουμένη
μίλλουσα.
plain that Jesus may well be esteemed to have ac- Heb. ii. 5.
complished the intent of those expressions; he (as Ὁ μίλλων
αἰών.
the *ἐπανορθωτὴς τοῦ κόσμου*, the rectifier and rearer of Heb. vi. 5.
Orig. in
Cels. 3.
the world, as Origen calleth him) having wrought
so huge alterations in the minds, and hearts, and
lives of men, in their principles and opinions, in their
dispositions and in their practices; having so changed
the face of affairs, and reformed the course of things
in the world; bringing men out of lamentable dark-
ness and error into clear light and knowledge, rescu-
ing them from superstition, impiety, and wickedness,
and engaging them into ways of true religion, holi-
ness, and righteousness; so many persons being ap-

SERM. XVIII. parently *renewed in the spirit of their minds*; being made *new creatures, created according to God in righteousness and true holiness*; so that, as the apostle speaks, *old things are passed away, behold all things are become new*; so that what the contumacious Jews in anger and ill-will did call Jesus's instruments, had a true sense; they were οἱ τὴν οἰκουμένην ἀναστατώσαντες, they *who had turned the world upside down*; they did so indeed, but so as to settle it in a better posture.

οἱ δὲ παρὲν
τοῦ
Χριστιανισ-
μοῦ οὐχ ἰσχύ-
ουσιν, &c.
Orig. in
Cels. lib. i.
p. 50. Vid.
Chrys. in
1 Cor. i.

Concerning which good effects of Christian religion the ancient Christians had good reason to glory, and to say with Origen; *The adversaries of Christianity do not discern, how many men's diseases of soul, and how many floods of vices, have been restrained; and how many men's savage manners have been tamed by reason of the Christian doctrine; wherefore being satisfied with the public beneficialness thereof, which by a new method doth free men from many mischiefs, they ought willingly to render thanks thereto, and to yield testimony, if not to the truth of it, yet to its profitableness to mankind.*

There remain behind several important considerations appertaining to this purpose, concerning the performances of the Messias, and events about him; his being to suffer grievous things from men, and for men; his performing miraculous works; the yielding various attestations from heaven to his person and doctrine; from the congruity of which particulars to what Jesus did endure and act; and to what God hath done in regard to him, the truth of our conclusion, that *Jesus is the very Christ*,

will be manifest: but time now forbiddeth the prosecution of those matters; and I must therefore reserve it to other occasion. SERM. XVIII.

Now, *To him that is able to keep us from* fall-^{* offending. Jude 24,} ing, and to present us blameless before the pre-^{25.} sence of his glory with exceeding joy, To the only wise God our Saviour, be glory and majesty, dominion and power, both now, and for ever.*

Unto the King † eternal, immortal, invisible, the^{† of ages. 1 Tim. i. 17.} only wise God, be honour and glory for ever and ever. Amen.

Blessing, and honour, and glory, and power, be^{Rev. v. 13.} unto him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb, for ever and ever.

Salvation be unto our God which sitteth upon^{vii. 10.} the throne, and unto the Lamb.

Amen; Blessing, and glory, and wisdom, and^{v. 12.} thanksgiving, and honour, and power, and might, be unto our God for ever and ever. Amen.

Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive^{v. 12.} power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing.

Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our^{i. 5, 6.} sins in his own blood, and hath made us kings and priests unto God and his Father; to him be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen.

And in Jesus Christ, &c.

SERMON XIX.

THAT JESUS IS THE TRUE MESSIAS.

ACTS ix. 22.

— *Proving that Jesus is the Christ.*

SERM. **WHAT** is the true notion of the name or title
XIX. *Christ*, we (in discoursing formerly upon this text) did explain. That one person, to whom that notion signally doth agree, was by God's especial determination to come into the world, we did also in the next place, from prophetic instruction (backed with the common tradition and current opinion of God's people) declare. We further in the sequel did propound to shew, that Jesus (whom we acknowledge) was that very person; the Messias predicted by the prophets, and expected by the Jews. This we have already (in the foregoing Discourses, proved from several circumstances of his birth and coming among men; from his personal qualifications, and from divers illustrious performances managed by him, in correspondency to what the prophets foretold concerning the Messias. The same we now proceed to confirm from other very considerable particulars

foretold by them, and suiting to him ; and first from **SERM.**
those things which the Messias was to undergo and **XIX.**
suffer.

Acts iii. 18.
Luke xviii.
31.

That the Messias was to come in a humble and homely manner, (without appearances of worldly splendour or grandeur ;) that he was to converse among men in a state of external poverty and meanness ; that he was to be disregarded and despised by men ; that he was to cause offences, and to find oppositions in his proceedings ; that he was to be repulsed and rejected, to be scorned and hated, to be disgracefully and hardly treated, to be grievously persecuted and afflicted ; yea, that at last he was to be prosecuted, condemned, and executed as a malefactor, is a truth which the Jews (although they firmly believed and earnestly expected the coming of a Messias) did not, and indeed were hardly capable to entertain. It was a point repugnant to the whole frame of their conceits, yea inconsistent with the nature and drift of their religion, as they understood it. For their religion in its surface (deeper than which their gross fancy could not penetrate) did represent earthly wealth, dignity, and prosperity as things highly valuable ; did propound them as very proper (if not as the sole) rewards of piety and obedience ; did imply consequently the possession of them to be certain arguments of the divine good-will and regard ; they could not therefore but esteem poverty, affliction, and disgrace, as curses from heaven, and plain indications of God's disfavour toward those on whom they fell : they particularly did conceit, that to be rich was a necessary qualification to a prophet, (no less necessary, than to be of a good complexion, of a good capacity, of a good life ;) *Spi-*

SERM. *ritus Dei non requiescit super pauperem; The*
 XIX. *Spirit of God rests not upon a poor man,* (that is, no special communications of grace, wisdom, goodness, are ever by God afforded to persons of a low or afflicted condition,) was a rule they had framed, and which passed among them. That he therefore, who was designed to be so notable a Prophet; who was to have the honour of being so special an instrument of promoting God's service and glory; who therefore must be so highly favoured by God, should appear despicable, and undergo great afflictions, was a notion that could not but seem very absurd, could not otherwise than be very abominable to them. They had also (in congruity to those prejudices, abetted by that extreme self-love and self-flattery, which were peculiar to that nation) raised in themselves a strong opinion, that the Messias was to come in a great visible state and power; to do acts of great prowess and renown, to bring the nations of the world into subjection under him, and so to reign among them in glorious majesty and prosperity. When Jesus therefore (however otherwise answerable in his circumstances, qualifications, and performances to the prophetic characters of the Messias) did appear, such as he did, with pretences (or intimations rather) that he was the Messias, their stomach rose at it, they were hugely offended at him, they deemed him not only a madman (one possessed or distracted) and an impostor, but a blasphemer; for to be no less than blasphemy they took it, for so pitiful a wretch to arrogate unto himself so high a dignity, so near a relation to God, as the being the Messias did import. We see even the disciples of our Lord so deeply tainted with this national prejudice, that (even after

Matt. xiv.
20.

Matt. xiii.
57. xxvi.
65.

they had acknowledged him to be *the Christ*) they could not with patience hear him foretelling what should befall him, (St. Peter, upon that occasion, even just after he had confessed him to be *the Christ*, did, as the text says, take him, and began to rebuke him, saying, *Be it far from thee, Lord.*) Yea, presently after that he most plainly had described his sufferings to them, they could not forbear dreaming of kingdoms, and being grandees in them; yea, even after our Lord's passion and resurrection, this fancy still possessed them; for even then they demand of him, whether he would *at that time restore the kingdom unto Israel*, (meaning such an external visible kingdom.)

SERM.
XIX.

Matt. xvi.
22. xvii. 2.
John xvi.
12.

Matt. xx.
21, 25.

Acts i. 6.

This hence of all *things notifying* the Messias seems to be the only particular which in general the Jews did not, or would not, see and acknowledge: and this caused them to oversee all *the rest*, how clearly soever shining in and about the person of Jesus. This cloud hindered them from discerning the excellency of his doctrine, from regarding the sanctity of his life, from being affected with the wonderfulness of his works; from minding or crediting all the testimonies ministered from heaven unto him. This, as St. Paul tells us, was the great scandal which obstructed their embracing the gospel. We cannot therefore here, as in other particulars, allege the general consent of God's people, in expounding the prophets according to our sense; this being one of those points, in respect to which the prophets did foresee and foretell their perverse stupidity and incredulity; that they should *look and not see, hear and not understand*; yielding herein special occasion to that complaint, *Who hath believed our report?*

Nisi enim
ignoratus
nihil pati
posset.
Tert. in
Marc. iii.
6.

1 Cor. i. 23.

Vid. Tert.
ibid.
Isa. vi. 9.
Ezek. xii. 2.
Matt. xiii.

13.
Acts xxviii.

26.

Isa. liii. 1.

SERM.
XIX.

Yet notwithstanding their (affected) blindness, there is no particular concerning the Messias, in the ancient scripture, either more frequently (in way of mystical insinuation, or adumbration) glanced at, or more clearly (in direct and plain language) expressed, or which also by reasonable deductions thence may be inferred more strongly than this. St. Peter Acts iii. 18. affirms, that *God had foreshewed it by the mouth of all his prophets* (not only of some, but *of all his prophets*;) the same our Lord himself did signify before his departure to his disciples out of Moses, the Prophets, and Psalms, shewing them this particular, and opening their minds to understand the scriptures concerning it; concluding his discourse to them thus, Ὅτι οὕτω γέγραπται, καὶ οὕτως ἔδει παθεῖν τὸν Χριστὸν, *Thus it was written, and thus ought Christ* (according to the prophetical presignifications and predictions) *to suffer*.

For the explaining and confirming of which truth, let us presume here to make a preparatory discourse or digression (not unseasonable perhaps, or improper to our purpose) concerning the nature of divine presignifications, which may serve to declare the pertinency of many citations produced out of the ancient scripture in the New Testament, (the which, together with others connected to them, or bearing analogy to them, we also, being assured of their design by the authority of our Lord and his apostles, may safely presume after them to apply to the same purposes.) We may then consider, that the allwise God, (who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will, and to whom all things are present) having before eternal times, as St. Paul speaketh, determined in due time to send the Messias for ac-

Eph. i. 11.

2 Tim. i. 9.

Tit. i. 2.

1 Cor. ii. 7.

Eph. i. 3.

iii. 9.

Rom. xvi.

25.

Col. i. 26.

accomplishing the greatest design that ever was to be managed in this world, (which should bring the highest glory to himself, and procure the greatest benefit to the principal of his creatures here,) did by his incomprehensible providence so order things, that all the special dispensations preceding it should have a fit tendency and advantageous reference thereto; so that when it came upon the stage, it might appear, that the main of the plot consisted therein, and that whatever before was acted, had a principal respect thereto. As therefore from the beginning of things God did in a gradual method make real preparations toward it, by steps imparting discoveries of his mind about it, or in order to it, (somewhat to Adam himself, more to Abraham and the patriarchs, somewhat further to Moses, much more yet to divers of the prophets among his chosen people, who not only foretold largely concerning it, but delivered several instructions conformable to it, and nearly conducing to the promoting thereof;) so he did also take especial care by many apposite *resemblances*, handsomely inserted into all his dispensations, to set it out, and to insinuate his meaning about it; that so at length it might shew itself with more solemnity, and less surprise. The most eminent persons therefore, whom he raised up and employed in his affairs tending to that end, as they did resemble the Messias in being instruments of his particular grace and providence, (being indeed inferior Christs and mediators, and partial saviours of his people, as they are sometimes called,) so they were ordered in several circumstances of their persons, in divers actions they did, in the principal accidents befalling them, to represent him; as also

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Νοντὰ θιω-
 ρήματα Eu-
 sebius calls
 them, *Eccl.*
Hist. i. 3.

Heb. viii. 6.
 Gal. iii. 19.
 Neh. ix. 27.
 Acts vii. 35.

Εἰκοναὶ
 Χριστοῦ
 (Christs in
 effigie) Eu-
 sebius calls
 them, *Eccl.*
Hist. i. 4.

SERM. the rites and services instituted by them were adapted
 XX. to the same purpose; they and all things about

* Heb. viii. them being *fitted by God's especial wise care, so

5. as to be congruous emblems and shadows presigni-

Exod. xxv. fying the Christ, and what appertained to him; his

40. circumstances and accidents, his performances, his

Rom. v. 14. institutions. Thus was Adam, as St. Paul calls him,

a type of Christ; Abel, Melchizedek, Isaac, Moses,

Joshua, David, Solomon, Zorobabel, are also inti-

mated to have been such; the most signal things

done by them, or befalling them, having been suited

to answer somewhat that was remarkable concern-

ing him; we may say of them all, as the apostle to

Heb. viii. 5. the Hebrews says of the Jewish priests; *They serv-*

ed to the subindication and shadowing of heavenly

things (οἵτινες ὑποδείγματι καὶ σκιᾷ λατρεύουσι τῶν ἐπου-

ρανίων.) In David particularly this relation is so

plain, that because thereof often (as we before noted)

in the prophets, (Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Hosea,) the

Messias is called by his name. It indeed well suited

the dignity of this great Person, and the importance

of his business, that he should have such notable

ushers, heralds, and harbingers *going before his*

Heb. viii. 5. *face*; furnished with conspicuous badges and ensigns

x. i. ix. 23. Gal. iv. 24. denoting their relation to him; it was proper that

Col. ii. 17. God should appear always to have had an express

care and especial regard toward him. It conse-

quently serves for our edification; for that we duly

comparing things, and discerning this admirable cor-

respondence, may be somewhat instructed thereby,

and somewhat confirmed in our faith; may be ex-

cited to the admiration of God's wisdom and good-

ness, (so provident for our good;) may also be in-

duced thereby the more highly to adore the Messias,

and to esteem his design^c. *All these things* (saith St. Paul, having compared divers things concerning Moses to things concerning Christ) *happened as types, and they were written for our admonition, on whom the ends of the world are come.* It is also (for illustration, and also for proof of these things) to be observed, that because those eminent servants of God were representatives of Christ, many things are spoken of them as such; many things are ascribed to them, which only or chiefly were intended of him; their names are used as veils to cover divers things concerning him, which it seemed not to divine wisdom convenient or seasonable in a more open and clear manner to disclose promiscuously to all men, (why God should choose to express things of this nature in such a manner, we need not to determine; it may be perhaps for reasons best known to himself, and above our ken or cognizance; yet probable reasons may be assigned for it, yea some more than probable being hinted in scripture; it may be for a decent and harmonious distinction of times, of dispensations, of persons; it may be from the depth of things to conciliate a reverence to them, and to raise the price of knowing them, by the difficulty of doing so; it may be to exercise and improve men's understanding, to inflame their desire, to excite their industry, to provoke their devotion, to render them humble; it may be to reward an honest and diligent study of God's word; it may be for occasion of freely conveying special gifts of interpretation; it may be to conceal some things from

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¹ Cor. x.
11, 6.

Vid. de
Script. Obs.
et Proph.
Chrys.
tom. vi. p.
649, &c.
et 658, &c.

Rev. ii. 7,
&c. xiii. 18.
xvii. 9.
Matt. xiii.
9. xxiv. 15.
Dan. ix. 1.
John v. 39.
Luke xxiv.
45.
¹ Cor. xii.
10. xiv. 26.
Eph. i. 9, 10.

Matt. xiii.
13. xi. 25.
vii. 6.

^c Ὅτι δὴ καὶ αὐτοὶ τῆς τοῦ μόνου καὶ ἀληθοῦς Χριστοῦ τοῦ κατὰ πάντων βασιλεύοντος θεοῦ λόγου βασιλικῆς καὶ ἀρχικῆς ἐξουσίας τοὺς τύπους δι' ἐαυτοῦ ἔφερον. (Euseb. 16, &c.)

SER M. some persons unfit or unworthy to know them, especially from persons haughty and self-conceited; it

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Acts iii. 17.
1 Cor. ii. 8.

may be to use the ignorance of some as a means to produce some great event, (*If they had known, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory;*) it cannot be supposed necessary that all things should be plainly discovered to all persons; it is evident that some things are purposely couched in parabolical and mysterious expression; it is particularly the manner of prophetic instruction frequently to involve things, the full and clear knowledge of which is not congruous to every season and every capacity: but to return from out of this parenthesis to our case.) That under the names of persons representing Christ (or of things we may add adumbrating his things) many things are intimated concerning him and his dispensations, may be collected and confirmed from hence, that many things are attributed to persons (and to things also) which do not agree to them; many things were promised, which appear never accomplished, except after a very improper and hyperbolical manner of expression, or according to an enormous wideness of interpretation; such as doth not well suit to the nature of true histories and serious promises. Thus, for instance, are many things foretold concerning the large extent and prosperous estate of the Jewish church, which history and experience testify never (according to strictness of literal acception, yea not in any tolerable degree near the height of what the words import) to have happened. Thus also, as the apostle to the Hebrews well argueth, effects are attributed to the Jewish rites and sacrifices, which according to the nature of the thing cannot belong to them, otherwise than

Isa. xxv. 8.

Heb. x. 4.

as shadows and substitutes of higher things. Thus SERM. XIX. also what is with solemn oath promised to Solomon Psal. xlv. lxxii. lxxxiii. &c. (concerning the vast extent and endless duration of his empire in righteousness, peace, and prosperity; together with his mighty acts and victorious achievements) doth not appear directly in any competent measure to have been performed. Thus also David, as St. Peter observes and argues in the second of the Acts, speaketh many things of himself, which cannot Acts ii. 29. be conceived properly and literally agreeable to him. Such things therefore are reasonably supposed to be intimations of somewhat appertaining to the future more perfect state of things under the Messias; to concern him (who was to be the end of the Law) Rom. x. 4. 2 Cor. iii. 13. Luke xxii. 37. and his dispensation, which was to contain the accomplishment of all things predicted and presignified. This is that which St. Austin signifies when he says, ^d *Which Christ* (saith he, *and what concerns him*)—*all the promises of that nation, all their prophecies, priesthoods, sacrifices, their temple, and altogether all their sacraments did resound, or express.*

Neither are these things only said according to suppositions assumed in the New Testament, but they agree (as to their general importance) to the sense of the ancient Jews, who did conceive such mysterious references often to lie couched under the letter of scriptures. They supposed a *midrash* or mystical sense of scripture, which they very studiously (even to excess commonly) did search after. It was, as Lud. Capellus affirms, a confident and In Exerc. ad Zohar.

^d Quem Christum—omnia gentis illius promissa, omnes prophetiæ, sacerdotia, sacrificia, templum, et cuncta omnino sacramenta sonuerunt. *Aug. ad Volus. Ep. iii.*

SERM. constant opinion of their doctors, that all things in
 XIX. Moses's law were typical, and capable of mystical
 exposition. And Philo's writings (composed in or
 immediately after our Saviour's times) are a plain
 confirmation of what he saith ; we have also several
 instances and intimations thereof in the New Tes-
 tament. Neither probably would the apostles in
 their discourses and disputations with the Jews have
 used this way of interpreting and citing passages of
 scripture, if they in general had not admitted and
 approved it.

Matt. xxi.
 9, 42. xxii.
 32, 42.

Now these things being (cursorily) premised, we
 return into our way, and say, that the Messias's
 being to suffer was in divers passages of the an-
 cient scripture prefigured. Supposing the thing itself
 should be, there is a peculiar reason why it should
 be so represented, thus expressed by Tertullian :
*‘The sacrament indeed, saith he, of Christ's pas-
 sion ought to have been figured in the (ancient)
 predicationes ; forasmuch as that the more incre-
 dible it was, if it should have been preached na-
 kedly, the more offensive it would have been ; and
 the more magnificent it was, the more it was to be
 shaded, that the difficulty of understanding it might
 cause the seeking of God's grace.* Supposing also
 it should be, the passages about Abel, Isaac, Josias,
 Jeremiah, (and the like,) may congruously be ap-
 plied thereto ; the elevation of the brasen serpent,
 and the killing of the paschal lamb, may appositely

‘ Utique sacramentum passionis ipsius figurari in prædicationi-
 bus oportuerat ; quantoque incredibile, tanto magis scandalum
 futurum ; quantoque magnificum, tanto magis adumbrandum, ut
 difficultas intellectus gratiam Dei quæreret. *Tertull. in Judæos,*
 cap. 10.

represent it ; the Jewish priests, with all their sacrifices, may also with reason be brought in and accommodated thereto : these things are not indeed by themselves alone apt peremptorily to evince that it should be ; yet do they handsomely suit it, and adorn the supposition thereof, according to the notion we touched about the typical relation between the matters of the old world before the Messias, and those of the new one after him. But with a clearer evidence and stronger force we may affirm, that the Messias's sufferings were implied in the afflictions of his representative king David, such as he in several Psalms (the 35th, 69th, 109th, 118th, and especially in the 22d Psalm) describeth them : wherein divers passages (expressing the extreme sadness and forlornness of his condition) occur, which by the history of his life do not so well, according to the literal signification of words, appear congruous to his person ; which therefore there is a necessity, or (at least) much reason, that they should be applied to the Messias, whom David did represent.

Which being admitted, comparing then the passages we have there to what befell Jesus, we shall find an admirable harmony, there being scarce any part of his affliction in his life, or any circumstance thereof at his death, which is not in emphatical and express terms there set out. There we have expressed his low and despicable estate ; (*I am a worm, Ps. xxii. 6. and no man ; the reproach of men, and despised of the people.*)—The causeless hatred and enmity of the populacy and of the great ones toward him ; (*They that hate me without a cause are more than Ps. lxi. 4. the hairs of my head ; they that would destroy me, xxxv. 7. cix. 3. being mine enemies wrongfully, are mighty: they*

SERM. *compassed me about with words of hatred, and*
 XIX. *fought against me without a cause.—*) The in-

Ps. xxxv.
 12. cix. 5.
 cxviii. 22.

grateful requital made to him for all the good done by him, and intended by him; (*They rewarded me evil for good, and hatred for my love*)—Their rejecting him; (*The stone which the builders refused is become the head stone in the corner*)—Their insidious and calumnious proceedings against him;

Ps. xxxv. 7.
 11. cix. 2.

(*Without cause have they hid for me their net in a pit, which without cause they have digged for my soul: and, False witnesses did rise up; they laid to my charge things that I knew not: and, The mouth of the wicked and the mouth of the deceitful are opened against me; they have spoken against me with a lying tongue*)—Their bitter in-

Ps. xxxv.
 15. lxix. 26.

sulting over him in his affliction; (*But in mine adversity they rejoiced, and gathered themselves together; yea the abjects gathered themselves together against me: They persecute him whom thou hast smitten, and they talk to the grief of those whom thou hast wounded: καὶ ἐπὶ τὸ ἄλγος τῶν τραυμάτων μου προσέθηκαν, and to the smart of my wounds they added, say the LXX.*)—Their scornful reviling, flout-

Ps. xxii. 7,
 8.

ing, and mocking him; (*All they that see me laugh me to scorn; they shoot the lip; they shake the*

Ps. cix. 25.
 xxxv. 21,
 16.

head, saying, He trusted in the Lord—that he would deliver him: let him deliver him, seeing he delighteth in him. I became a reproach unto them: when they looked upon me, they shaked their heads. They opened their mouth wide against me, and said, Aha, Aha! our eye hath seen it. Ἐπείρασαν με, ἔξεμυκτηρίσαν με μυκτηρισμὸν, ἔβρυξαν ἐπ' ἐμὲ τοὺς ὀδόντας αὐτῶν They tempted me, they extremely mocked me, they gnashed their teeth upon me)—The cruel manner

of their dealing with him; (*Dogs have compassed me; the assembly of the wicked have enclosed me; they pierced my hands and my feet. I may tell all my bones: they look and stare upon me*)—Their dealing with him, when in his distress he called for some refreshment; (*They gave me gall for my meat, and in my thirst they gave me vinegar to drink*)—Their disposal of his garments upon his suffering; (*They part my garments among them, and cast lots upon my vesture*)—His being deserted of his friends, and destitute of all consolation; (*I am become a stranger to my brethren, and an alien unto my mother's children: I am full of heaviness; and I looked for some to take pity, but there was none; and for comforters, but I found none*)—The sense of God's withholding his favour and help; (*My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me? why art thou so far from helping me?*)—His charitable disposition and behaviour toward his persecutors; (*But as for me, when they were sick, (or as the LXX. when they did trouble me, Ἐν τῷ αὐτοῦς παρενοχλεῖν μοι,) my clothing was sackcloth: I humbled myself with fasting; and my prayer returned into mine own bosom: I behaved myself as though it had been my friend or brother; I bowed down heavily, as one that mourneth for his mother.*) Which passages and the like, how patly and punctually they do square to respective passages in the gospels, I need not to shew; we do all, I suppose, well enough remember that both most doleful and comfortable history, to be able ourselves to make the application.

But there are not only such oblique intimations, shrouded under the coverture of other persons and names, but direct and immediate predictions con-

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cerning the Messias's being to suffer most clearly expressed. That whole famous chapter in Isaiah (the 53d chapter) doth most evidently and fully declare it, wherein the kind, manner, causes, ends, and consequences of his sufferings, together with his behaviour under them, are graphically represented. His

Isa. liii. 2. appearing meanness; (*He hath no form nor comeliness; and when we shall see him, there is no beauty that we should desire him*)—The disgrace, contempt,

ver. 3. repulses, and rejection he underwent; (*He is despised and rejected of men—we hid our faces from him; he was despised, and we esteemed him not*)—

ver. 3, 4. His afflicted state; (*He is a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief; we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted*)—The bitter and painful manner of his affliction; (*He was stricken; bore stripes, was wounded, was bruised*)—His being accused, adjudged, and condemned as a malefactor;

ver. 8, 12. (*He was taken from prison and from judgment—he was numbered among the transgressors*)—His

ver. 12, 8, 7. consequent death; (*He poured out his soul unto death; He was cut out of the land of the living*)—The design and end of his sufferings; they were appointed and inflicted by divine Providence for our sake, and in our stead; for the expiation of our sins,

ver. 10, 5, 4, 8, 6, 12. and our salvation; (*It pleased the Lord to bruise him: he hath put him to grief: when thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin:—He was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed:—Surely he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows:—For the transgression of my people he was smitten:—The Lord hath laid on him the iniqui-*

ties of us all)—His sustaining all this with a will-
ing patience and meekness; (*He was oppressed,*
and he was afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth:
he is brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a
sheep before the shearers is dumb, so he opened not
his mouth)—His charitable praying for his persecu-
tors; so that may be understood, (*He made inter-*
cession for the transgressors)—The consequence
and success of his sufferings; (*He shall see his seed,*
he shall prolong his days, and the pleasure of the
Lord shall prosper in his hand. He shall see of
the travail of his soul, and shall be satisfied: by
his knowledge shall my righteous servant justify
many; and, I will divide him a portion with the
great, and he shall divide the spoil with the strong.)
Which passages as they most exactly suit to Jesus,
and might in a manner constitute an historical nar-
ration of what he did endure, together with the
opinions taught in the gospel concerning the intent
and effect of his sufferings; so that they did (accord-
ing to the intention of the divine Spirit) relate to
the Messias, may from several considerations be ap-
parent; the context and coherence of all this passage
with the precedent and subsequent passages, which
plainly respect the Messias, and his times: *How*
beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him
that bringeth good tidings! and, *Behold, my ser-*
vant shall deal prudently, &c. are passages imme-
diately going before, of which this 53d chapter is
but a continuation; and immediately after it follow-
eth, *Sing, O barren, thou that didst not bear, &c.*
being a very elegant and perspicuous description of
the church augmented by accession of the Gentiles,
which was to be brought to pass by the Messias.

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ver. 7.

ver. 12.

ver. 10, 11,

12.

Isa. lii. 7,

13.

SERM. The general scope of this whole prophecy argues the
XIX. same ; and the incongruity of this particular prediction to any other person imaginable beside the Messias doth further evince it ; so high are the things which are attributed to the suffering Person ; as that he should *bear the sins* of all God's people, and heal them ; that he should *by his knowledge justify many* ; that *the pleasure of the Lord should prosper in his hand* ; that God would *divide him a portion with the great*, and that he should *divide the spoil with the strong* ; the magnificency and importance of which things do well agree to the Messias, but not to any other person : whence if the ancient Jews had reason to believe a Messias, they had as much reason to apply this place to him as any other, and to acknowledge he was to be a great sufferer ; and indeed divers of the ancient Targumists and most learned Rabbins did expound this place of the one Messias that was to come, as the *Pugio Fidei* and other learned writers do by several testimonies shew. This place also discovers the vanity of that figment devised by some later Jews, who, to evade and oppose Jesus, affirmed there was to be a double Messias, (one who should be much afflicted, the other who should greatly prosper,) since we may observe that here both great afflictions and glorious performances are ascribed to the same person.

The same things are also by parts clearly predicted in other places of this prophet, and in other scriptures : by Isaiah again in the chapter immediately foregoing ; *Behold*, saith he, *my servant shall deal prudently, he shall be exalted and extolled, and be very high*, (there is God's servant (he that is in way of excellency such, that is, in this

prophet's style, the Messias) in his real glorious capacity; it follows, concerning his external appearance,) *his visage was so marred more than any man, and his form more than the sons of men:* and again, in the 49th chapter, *Thus saith the Lord, the Redeemer of Israel, and his Holy One; To him whom man despiseth, to him whom the nation abhorreth, to a servant of rulers, kings shall see and arise, princes also shall worship.* What can be more express and clear, than that the Messias, who should subject the world, with its sovereign powers, to the acknowledgment and adoration of himself, was to be despised by men, to be detested by the Jews, and to appear in a servile and base condition? The same prophet again brings him in speaking thus: *I gave my back to the smiters, and my cheeks to them that plucked off the hair; I hid not my face from shame and spitting.* His offending the Jews and aggravating their sins is also expressed by this same prophet; *And, saith he, he shall be for a sanctuary; but for a stone of stumbling, and for a rock of offence to both the houses of Israel; for a gin and for a snare to the inhabitants of Jerusalem.* The opposition also he should receive is signified in the 2d Psalm; *The kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers take counsel together against the Lord, and against his anointed.* The prophet Zechariah doth also in several places very roundly express his sufferings: his low condition in those words; *Behold, thy King cometh unto thee lowly, (pauper,) and riding upon an ass:* his manner of death in those; *Awake, O sword, against my shepherd, and against the man that is my fellow,*⁷ *saith the Lord of hosts; smite the shepherd, and*

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Isa. xlix. 7.

Isaiah l. 6.

Isa. viii. 14.

Psal. ii. 2.

Zech. ix. 9.

Zech. xiii.

SERM. *the sheep shall be scattered; and again; I will*
 XIX. *pour upon the house of David, and upon the in-*
 Zech. xii. *habitants of Jerusalem, the spirit of grace and of*
 10. *supplications; and they shall look upon me, whom*
they have pierced, and they shall mourn, &c. The
 prophet Daniel also in that place, from which pro-
 Dan. ix. 26. *expressly mentions him, saith, that after threescore*
and two weeks the Messias shall be cut off, but
not for himself. Now from these passages of scrip-
 Luke xxiv. *ture we may well say with our Lord; Ὅτι οὕτω γέ-*
 26. *γραπται, καὶ οὕτως ἔδει παθεῖν τὸν Χριστόν. That thus it*
was written, and thus, according to the prophet's
foretelling, it was to happen, that the Messias
should suffer; suffer in a life of penury and con-
tempt, in a death of shame and sorrow.

That it was to be thus might also be inferred by reasons grounded on the qualities of the Messias's person, and the nature of his performances, such as they are described in the scripture. He was to be really and to appear plainly a person of most admirable virtue and good worth; but never was there or can be any such (as even pagan philosophers, Plato, Seneca, and others, have observed) without undergoing the trial of great affliction. He was to be an universal pattern to men of all sorts, (especially to the greatest part, that is, to the poor,) of all righteousness; to exemplify particularly the most difficult pieces of duty, (humility, patience, meekness, charity, self-denial, entire resignation to God's will;) this he should not have opportunity or advantage of doing, if his condition had been high, wealthy, splendid, and prosperous. He was to exercise pity and sympathy towards all mankind; the

which to do it was requisite he should feel the inconveniences and miseries incident to mankind. He was to advance the repute of spiritual and eternal goods; and to depress the value of those corporeal and temporal things, which men vainly admire; the most ready and compendious way of doing this was by an exemplary neglecting and refusing worldly enjoyments, (the honours, profits, and pleasures here.) He was by gentle and peaceable means to erect a spiritual kingdom, to subdue the hearts and consciences of men to the love and obedience of God, to raise in men the hopes of future rewards and blessings in heaven; to the accomplishment of which purposes temporal glory had been rather prejudicial than conducive. He was to manage his great designs by means supernatural and divine, the which would be more conspicuous by the visible meanness and impotency of his state. He was to merit most highly from God for himself and for men; this he could not do so well, as in enduring for God's sake and ours the hardest things. He was to save men, and consequently to appease God's wrath and satisfy his justice, by the expiation of our sins; this required that he should suffer what we had deserved. But reasons of this kind I partly before touched, and shall hereafter have occasion to prosecute more fully in treating upon the article of our Saviour's passion.

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Now that Jesus (our Lord) did most thoroughly correspond to whatever is in this kind declared concerning the Messias, we need not by relating minutely the known history of his life and death make out further; since the whole matter is palpably notorious, and no adversary will deny it. I conclude

SERM. this point with St. Peter's words, (for the illustration

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and proof of which this Discourse hath been made

Acts iii. 18. *But those things which God before had shewed
the mouth of all his prophets, that Christ should
suffer, he hath so fulfilled.*

And in Jesus Christ, &c.

S E R M O N XX.

THAT JESUS IS THE TRUE MESSIAS.

JOHN v. 37.

And the Father himself, which hath sent me, hath borne witness of me.

JESUS, our Lord, here and in the context doth **SERM.**
affirm, that Almighty God, his Father, had granted **XX.**
unto him several kinds of extraordinary attestation,
sufficient to convince all well-disposed persons, unto
whom they shall be discovered, that he truly was
that Messias, whom God before all beginning of time
had designed, and frequently by his prophets had
promised to send for the reformation of the world
and salvation of mankind : to represent those several
ways of divine attestation with some reflections on
them, serving both to the confirmation of our faith,
and improving our affection and our reverence there-
to, is my chief design at this time.

But first, in preparation to what we shall say
concerning those particulars, and for declaration of
the divine wisdom in this manner of proceeding, I
shall assign some reasons, why it was requisite that
such attestations should be afforded to our Lord.

1. The nature of the Messias's office required such
attestations ; for since he was designed to the most

SERM. eminent employment that ever was or could be com-
 XX. mitted to any person ; since he was to reveal things
 no less great and important, than new and strange ;
 since he was to assume a most high authority unto
 himself ; since he was to speak and act all in the
 name of God ; since also all men under great penal-
 ties were obliged to yield credit and obedience to
 him, there was great reason that God should appear
 to authorize him ; that he should be able to produce
 God's hand and seal to his commission ; for that
 otherwise he might have been suspected of impos-
 ture ; his doctrine might have been rejected, his au-
 thority disclaimed, and his design frustrated, with-
 out great blame, or however without men's being
 convincible of blame : for well might the people
 suspect that person, who, professing to come in such
 a capacity an extraordinary agent from heaven,
 brought no credentials thence, (no evidence of God's
 especial favour and assistance ;) well might they re-
 ject that new doctrine, which God vouchsafed not
 by any signal testimony to countenance ; well might
 they disclaim that authority, which offering to in-
 troduce so great innovations (to repeal old laws, to
 cancel settled obligations, to abolish ancient customs ;
 to enact new laws and rules, exacting obedience to
 them from all men) should not be able to exhibit
 its warrant, and shew its derivation from heaven :
 well might such peremptory assertions and so confi-
 dent pretences, without confirmations answerable in
 weight, beget even in wise men distrust and aversa-
 tion. The reasonableness and excellency of his doc-
 trine, the innocence and sanctity of his life, the wis-
 dom and persuasiveness of his discourse would not,
 if nothing more divine should attend them, be tho-

roughly able to procure faith and submission ; they would at best have made his precepts to pass for the devices of a wise man, or the dictates of a good philosopher. They were therefore no unreasonable desires or demands (if they had proceeded from a good meaning, and had been joined with a docile and tractable disposition) which the Jews did make to our Lord ; *Master, we would see a sign from thee ; what sign therefore dost thou do, that we may see, and believe thee ? what dost thou work ? what sign dost thou shew to us, that thou doest these things ?* that is, how dost thou prove thy doctrine credible, or thy authority valid, by God's testimony and warrant ? This challenge our Lord himself acknowledged somewhat reasonable ; for he not only asserts the truth of his doctrine and validity of his commission by divine attestation, (in words and works,) nor only exhorts them to credit him upon that account, but he also plainly signifies that his bare affirmation did not require credit, and that if he could produce no better proof, they were excusable for disbelieving him : *If, saith he, I witness of myself, my witness is not true ;* not true, that is, not credible ; or not so true, as to oblige to belief : and, *If I do not the works of my Father,* (that is, works only imputable to God's extraordinary power,) *believe me not ;* that is, I require no belief from you : yea, he further adds, *If I had not done the works among them, which no man else had done, they* (the incredulous people then) *had not had any sin ;* that is, had not been culpable for unbelief. It was then from the nature of the Messias's office and undertaking very necessary, that he should have attestations of this kind ; and our Lord himself, we see, declines

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John ii. 18.
vi. 30.
Matt. xii.
28. xvi. 1.
Mark viii.
12.

John viii.
16, 29. x.
25. v. 32,
36.

John v. 31.

John x. 37.

John xv.
24.

SERM. not, but aggravateth his pretences with this neces-
 XX. sity.

Ἀνάπτυξον
 τῇ διανοίᾳ,
 καὶ ἐνέησον
 ἡλίαν ἐν τῇ
 τῇ ὑφ' ἡλίου
 κεκρίνην ἁ-
 πασαν, &c.
 Chrys. tom.
 vi. Or. lxi.
 p. 634.

2. The effects which the Messias was to produce did require extraordinary attestations and assistances from God. He was to achieve exploits of the greatest difficulty conceivable; far surpassing all that ever was by any person undertaken in the world before: he was to vanquish all the powers, and to confound all the policies of hell; he was to subdue and subjugate all the world; to make the greatest princes to stoop, and to submit their sceptres to his will; to bring down the most haughty conceits, and to break down the most stubborn spirits, and to tame the wildest passions of men; he was to expel from their minds most deeply rooted prejudices, to banish from their practice most inveterate customs, to cross their most violent humours, to thwart their interests, to bear down their ambitions, to restrain their covetous desires and their voluptuous appetites; he was to persuade a doctrine, and to impose a law, very opposite to the natural inclinations, to the current notions, to the worldly advantages, the liberties, emoluments, and enjoyments of all, or of most, or of many people; he was, in short, so to reform the world, as in a manner quite to alter the whole frame of it, and all the course of affairs therein; things which surely it were a madness to enterprise, and an impossibility to accomplish, without remarkable testimonies of the divine presence, especial aids of the divine power, and large influences of the divine Spirit communicated to him; without, as St. Peter phraseth it, *God were with him*; these things were not effectible by means natural and ordinary, by human wit or eloquence, by good behaviour or example, by the bare

Acts x. 38.
 John iii. 2.

reason or plausibility of doctrine, by the wise conduct or industrious management of the design; no, SERM.
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such means have by many experiments appeared insufficient to bring about much lesser matters; nothing under the wisdom of God directing, the power of God assisting, the authority of God establishing and gracing his endeavours in an eminent and evident manner, could enable the Messias to bring these mighty things to pass.

3. We may further consider, that *the Christ* was designed to present himself first to the Jews, (in the first place imparting the declarations of God's will and gracious intentions to them, his ancient friends and favourites;) that is, to a people wholly addicted to this sort of proof, and incapable of conviction by any other: they did not, as did *the Greeks*, seek 1 Cor. i. 22. wisdom, but *required a sign*, as St. Paul observed of them; they were not so apt to inquire after the intrinsic reasons of things, as to expect testimonies from heaven; nothing else was able to persuade them; so our Lord expressly saith; *Jesus said* John iv. 48. *unto them, If you do not see signs and prodigies, you will nowise believe:* in consequence of which disposition in them, we see by passages in the New Testament, that they expected and believed the Messias should come with such attestations and performances; so their importunate demanding of signs upon all occasions from our Lord doth signify, and so those words in St. John do imply; *And many of* John vii. 31. *the people believed on him, and said, When Christ cometh, will he do more miracles than these, which this man doeth?* where we may observe both their expectation of miraculous works from the Messias, and the efficacy which such works had upon them.

SERM. The condition also of the Gentiles, unto whom his
 XX. design in the next place did extend, seemed to re-
 quire the same proceedings : for all other methods
 of instruction and persuasion had before often been
 applied to them by philosophers and by politicians,
 for instilling their notions and recommending their
 laws ; they had been so inured to subtile argu-
 mentations and plausible discourses, that the bare
 use of them was not likely to have any extraordi-
 nary effect upon them : if the Messiah therefore
 should bring no other confirmation with him unto
 them, he would seem to deserve no higher regard
 or credit, than other doctors or lawgivers, which
 had appeared among them ; and as easily would he
 be declined, and put off by them : whence reason-
 ably it may be supposed, that for accommodation to
 the genius and the capacities of those upon whose
 hearts he was to make impression, the Messiah should
 come furnished with such special testimonials and
 powers from God. Especially considering that,

4. It was agreeable to God's usual method of pro-
 ceeding in cases resembling this, although much un-
 equal thereto in weight and consequence. There
 was never any more than ordinary discovery made
 to men by God, never any very considerable busi-
 ness managed by divine Providence, never hardly
 any eminent person appeared with a pretence of
 coming from God for the prosecution of such pur-
 poses, without God's visible interposal and abet-
 ment. This hath always been the authentic seal,
 whereby he hath wanted to authorize the messen-
 gers sent from himself for transacting affairs of an
 unusual and very weighty nature ; whereby his true
 ambassadors have been distinguishable from ordi-

John vi. 27.

Orig. cont.
 Cels. viii.
 (p. 408.)

nary persons, or from deceitful pretenders, who have offered to impose their own devices upon men: to a person bringing with him this sort of assurance (except when his tale is evidently false and vain, or his design notoriously wicked and mischievous) God hath always required, that a ready credence and obedience should be yielded; taking it for a high affront to himself (no less, as St. John says, than *giving him the lie*) to disbelieve such a person, and for a heinous contumacy to disobey him: that it hath been God's ordinary method, the course of divine history shews. When God separated the patriarchs for the preservation and propagation of his true religion, he manifested an especial presence with them, frequently appearing to them, visibly assisting and blessing them in a more than ordinary manner, enduing them with a prophetic discretion and foresight of things: when he would rescue the seed of those his friends from cruel oppression and hard slavery, (designing also by them to maintain and convey down the sincere way of piety,) he imparted also unto Moses, the especial instrument of those purposes, a power of doing wonders, thereby procuring authority to his person, and credit to his pretences. Moses did well perceive, and judge, that had he come without such attestation he should not have been received or regarded: *But, behold,* said he, *they will not believe me, nor hearken to my voice; for they will say, The Lord hath not appeared unto thee:* wherefore God furnished him with such a power of doing such things as should assure the truth of his message; the effect whereof is thus expressed; *Israel saw that great work, which the Lord did upon the Egyptians; and the people*

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1 John v.
10.
John iii. 33.

Gen. xxi.
22.

Exod. iv. 1.

Exod. iv. 5,
31. xiv. 31.
Deut. iv. 34.
v. 15. vii. 19.
iv. 35, 39.

SERM. *feared the Lord, and believed the Lord, and his*
 XX. *servant Moses:* to the promulgation of the law,
 and establishment of that particular covenant with
 the Israelites, God did also exhibit significations of
 his presence in a most evident and affecting manner:
 Exod. xix. *Lo, said God to Moses, expressing that matter and*
 9. *its design, I come unto thee in a thick cloud, that*
 Neh. ix. 13. *the people may hear when I speak with thee, and*
believe thee for ever. And in the whole conduct
 of that people toward Canaan, God for those ends
 vouchsafed by Moses to perform very great and
 prodigious things; which we may see reckoned up
 Ps. lxxviii. in the 78th and 105th Psalms, and in the 9th of
 14. cv. 39. Nehemiah. So also when God employed Elias to
 Neh. ix. 15. sustain the remainders of decayed piety in Israel
 against the countenance of power given to wicked-
 ness, and against the stream of popular use, he en-
 dued him with a liberal measure of his Spirit, and
 a power of doing great miracles: the like may be
 observed of all the prophets, judges, and princes,
 who upon special occasions were raised to perform
 considerable services for the glory of God and the
 good of his people. This therefore being God's con-
 stant practice, it cannot but be well supposed, that
 in this case he would not withhold his attestation,
 but would afford it in a most plentiful measure to
 that person who was in dignity so far to excel all
 other his envoys and agents; whose undertaking
 should in importance so vastly transcend all others,
 that ever were set on foot in the world; to him,
 who was to free, not one small people only, but all
 mankind, not from a temporal slavery in Egypt, but
 from eternal misery in hell; to promulge, not a pe-
 dagogy of ritual observances, but a law of spiritual

righteousness ; to establish, not a temporal covenant for a little spot of earth, but an everlasting testament for all the world, importing endless beatitude in heaven. God therefore surely would not balk his road upon such an occasion, nor refuse his especial testimonials to so great a personage, and to so good a design. SERM.
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5. If we consider the general reasons assignable, why God hath been wont to proceed in this manner, or why he should use it upon any occasion, they are with strongest force applicable to this case. The most general reasons why God doth ever interpose extraordinarily, or produce works supernatural, are, to assert palpably his own divinity and providence ; strongly to encourage devotion and piety in men : for he by suspending or thwarting the course of nature plainly declareth himself the maker and master thereof ; that he freely made the world, and freely doth uphold it ; that he hath not tied his own hands, nor confined his power within limits ; but is superior to and free from all laws, excepting those of indefectible holiness and goodness ; and consequently that all things do not proceed in a track of dead fatality. He thereby also assureth us, that he hath an especial regard unto and a care over men, and wisely ordereth human affairs by his providence, frequently (as wisdom directeth and occasion requireth) interposing his hand for the succour, encouragement, and reward of good men ; that therefore it is not vain to hope and trust in him ; that prayers and devotions are available to procure good from him ; that repentance and obedience are no less profitable for us, than acceptable to him ; that also he freely and justly dispenseth recompenses suitable to men's actions volun-

SERM. XX. **tarily performed ; that in fine there is a foundation of religion, and a ground of justice between God and man : these things are most evidently and effectually demonstrated by extraordinary attestations ; and when therefore could they more seasonably be used, than when God by the Messias intended to call all the world to the acknowledgment and obedience of himself, to the practice of all piety and goodness, with assurances of fit reward, in regard to such practice ? If further to excite men's attention and regard, to breed awe and reverence in men's minds, to confound the impudence, and to bend or break the obstinacy of men, are main ends and proper effects of such testimonies ; whether we consider the Messias's person, the nature of his undertaking, or the persons with whom he was to deal, it is plain (as we have shewed) that his business would best deserve and most need them : no dispensation could better deserve them for worth and consequence ; none could more need them for greatness and difficulty.**

Such reasons may be assigned for the necessity and usefulness of divine attestations in this case : but in opposition to these discourses, and in derogation to this way of confirming any truth or authority, it may be said, that no such testifications can well serve to such purposes ; for that the like have been and may be applied to the persuasion of error and impiety by *false prophets* and *antichrists*, by *magicians* and *wizards* ; who not only have cunningly counterfeited, but really executed very prodigious and wondrous things, in a manner unaccountable to human philosophy. Since also there are wicked spirits, in subtilty and power far exceeding

Deut. xiii.

^{30.}
Matt. xxiv.^{24.}
2 Thess. ii.

2.

us, who are able easily to divert the natural course of things; and the limits of whose power in working so, it is hard for us to discern or define; ^{SERM. XX.} how can we be assured, that what is done in this kind doth not proceed from them, but from a virtue divine? how can it be a certain and convincing argument of truth? may we not here object that of Tertullian, saying, that *our Lord pronouncing that many impostors should come, and do miracles, shewed thereby the faith groundred on miracles to be temerarious^b.*

To this suggestion we may in general return, that seeing the doing such things is the chief and most effectual way whereby God, beyond the resistance of doubt or dispute, can in some cases assure us concerning his mind and will, (whereby he can bestow honour and credit to any instrument employed by him, to any revelation proceeding from him,) it cannot but (notwithstanding that cross instance) reasonably be supposed, that God however doth reserve the power thereof in some eminent and discernible manner peculiar to himself, for the promoting his own service. That also at least God being the author and establisher of nature, and the continual sustainer of it by his free providence, it is not likely that he will suffer the laws and course thereof to be much violated, except upon occasions very considerable, and for very good purposes; no inferior cause being able to determine his voluntary influence or

^a Πῶς αὖν οὐ σχέτλιον ἀπὸ τῶν αὐτῶν ἔργων τὸν μὲν Θεὸν, τοὺς δὲ γοήτας ἠγεῖσθαι; Cels. apud Orig. lib. ii. p. 89.

^b Siquidem edicens multos venturos, et signa facturos, temerariam plane signorum et virtutum fidem ostendit, ut apud pseudochristianos facillimarum. *Tert. in Marc. iii. 2.*

SERM. providential concourse to the accomplishment of de-
XX. signs contrary to his will and purpose. That also
 the natural goodness and justice of God, the constant care and providence he exerciseth over this world, the particular relations he beareth toward mankind, (as the Maker and Father, the Lord and Governor thereof,) the honour and interest of truth, of religion, of virtue, (whose protector and patron he is, and declareth himself,) the necessary regard he also, in connexion with the rest, doth bear to his own honour and glory, do all conspire to persuade, that God will never endure such things to be performed in any high manner, so that good and well-meaning people shall be very liable to be thereby extremely seduced into error ; or that himself shall be intolerably mocked by the enemies of his glory and our good. This may serve to render it probable, that the objection is capable of a solution.

1 Cor. xi. 19.
 2 Thess. ii.
 9, 11.
 Dent. xiii.
 1, &c.
 Matt. xxiv.
 24.
 Rev. xiii.
 13.

But to answer more distinctly and particularly; we do grant, that God sometimes for special reasons (for wise probation of some persons and just punishment of others ; for to approve some men's sincerity and constancy, to detect other men's naughtiness and vanity) may permit such things (in some manner, in some degree such) to be effected by the influence of wicked spirits, or the fraud of wicked men ; yet then it will never be very hard for moderately wise and well-disposed persons to distinguish such feats from those acts which issue from the positive and direct efficacy of God, for authorizing his messengers and confirming his truth : we may usually discern them to come from bad causes by their nature ; we may certainly detect them by their design and influence.

There are some things so great, that it is not rea- SERM.
sonable to conceive, that any such inferior power is XX.
able to do them ; or, if they were able, that God
should permit their power actually to be exerted,
and to succeed in doing them : such is the making
any general or grand alteration in the course of na-
ture ; which being God's great work and establish-
ment, the which he doth, as the prophets speak, Jer. v. 22.
govern by a standing law, and preserve according xxxiii. 25.
to a perpetual decree, which cannot pass ; yea ac- Ps. cxlviii.
cording to a covenant, which his faithfulness is in a 26.
manner engaged to observe ; it is not probable that
he will suffer any creature to disturb or disorder :
this experience well confirmeth ; for had bad spirits
a power of crossing nature so, such is their malice
and proneness to do mischief, that the world would
soon have been turned by them into confusion and
ruin ; that all things therein go in so kindly and
steady a course, is an argument of their small power
and influence upon things ; that God holdeth the
reins fast in his own hands, reserving to himself
only as Lord paramount of nature a power to dis-
pense with any of its main laws ; that it is *he alone*, Ps. cxxxvi.
who, as the Psalmist saith, *doeth great wonders*. 4. lxxii. 18.
There are also some things, which although not of lxxxvi. 10.
so great and general consequence, are yet of so diffi- Dent. iii. 24.
cult performance, that it is improbable any creature
should effect them ; such was the turning of dust
into lice, which the devils could not enable the Egyp-
tian sorcerers to perform ; to prepare or dispose so
much dust for the reception of souls, and to furnish
so many souls for the dust, did, it seems, exceed their
ability ; whence they were forced to confess of that
miracle done by Moses, *This is the finger of God.* Exod. viii.
19.

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There are also things so good, and so beneficial to mankind, that evil spirits may be deemed unable to do them, (God, the fountain of good, retaining them as instruments of his glory, and arguments of his goodness, to his own dispensation,) which also we may presume they would not be willing, were they able, to perform, it being against their disposition or their interest to do it; such are, to dispossess devils, (that is, to divide and weaken their own kingdom;) to discover moral truths of consequence, (that is, to drive men from themselves;) and even to free men from grievous diseases, (that is, to starve their own ἐπιχαιρεκακία, and malignity;) as is implied in that passage of the gospel, where it is said, *These are not the words of him that hath a devil: Can a devil open the eyes of the blind?* Extraordinary works then, if they are very great, very hard, very good, do thence indicate their cause to be divine: wicked spirits deal only in petty, low, and useless prestigiatory tricks, of small consequence, and no benefit.

But there are further some things infallibly signifying a divine virtue, peculiar to God, and (either by their nature or from the decree of God) incommunicable to any creature, otherwise than as acted by God, or immediately depending on him: such are, the knowledge of future contingent events declared by predicting, or presignifying them, according to that of the prophet; *Shew*, said he, in way of challenge and conviction to the objects of heathen worship, *the things to come, that we may know ye are gods*: such is the discerning men's secret thoughts and intentions, the which God assumeth as proper to himself; *I the Lord search the heart, I*

try the reins; so that καρδιογνώστης is a characteristic attribute, or title, proper to him. Such is the restitution of men from a state of death to life; a work not only in itself most difficult, in respect to the ordinary rule of nature, which it transgresseth, but impossible to any mere creature, without God's aid; for that the souls of men when they die return into God's hand, and enter into a state determined by his high sentence; whence no creature can fetch them down, or raise them up; most impossible also because God by especial decree hath reserved the power of doing it appropriate to himself; the power of life and death being his prerogative, who saith, *I am he, and there is no God * beside me; I kill, and I make alive*: of whom again it is said, *The Lord killeth, and maketh alive; he bringeth down to the grave, and bringeth up*. He it is that in his hand doth *hold the keys of hell and of death*. The performing things also by mere word and will, without application of other force, or any preparation of the subject-matter, (being equivalent to the work of creation,) is peculiar unto God, the author of all being, or to such as act by the immediate help of his infinite power.

We may add, that there also seem to be some things, which infernal spirits (who continue under restraint and command, within a great awe and dread of their Judge) dare not so much as pretend to or counterfeit; knowing that as presently they shall be checked in their attempt, so they shall be grievously chastised for their presumptions; such may be the assuming to themselves the special names of God, the directly withstanding the extraordinary messengers of God, and the like.

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1 Chron.
xxviii. 9.
1 Sam. xvi.
7.
Psalm. vii. 9.
Acts i. 24.
xv. 8.

Deut. xxxii.
39.
* Πλὴν ἑμοῦ.
1 Sam. ii. 6.

Rev. i. 18.

Matt. viii.
29.
Mark i. 24.
Luke viii.
28.

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So even considering the very nature of strange works may enable us to distinguish them; but the end and design of such works, together with the influences and effects of them, will further ascertain us of their original: if they are done to abet any gross error, or to promote any mischievous purpose; if they manifestly do seduce to apostasy from God or goodness; if they naturally tend to the production of impiety, iniquity, or impurity; if they do necessarily produce any great disorder or disturbance in the world, assuredly hell is the source of them; they derive from him whose kingdom and interest they advance; by their fruits we may know the tree from which they grow. If also they discover ostentation and vanity in the actors, or serve only to gratify idle humour and curiosity in the spectators of them, tending otherwise to no good purpose; it is easy to collect whence they spring; that they come from the father both of mischiefs and vanities, who not only delights to abuse us with villainies, but to amuse us also with trifles and fond superstitions.

As, saith Origen, the power of those enchantments in Egypt was not, in itself, like to that admirable power by God's grace vouchsafed to Moses; so the end did convince those Egyptian feats to be jugglings, those of Moses to be divine^c.

2 Thess. ii.
9.

The portentous things done *by the energy of Satan* are, as St. Paul calleth them, τέρατα ψεύδους, either false prodigies, or prodigies abetting falsehood and vanity.

^c Ὡς γὰρ οὐχ ὁμοία δύναμις ἡ τῶν ἐν Αἰγύπτῳ ἐπαυδῶν τῇ ἐν τῷ Μωϋσῇ παραδόξῳ χάριτι, ἀλλὰ τὸ τέλος διέλεγε τὰ μὲν τῶν Αἰγυπτίων ὄντα μαγανείας. Orig. in Cels. 2.

But the works of the most wise and good God, SERM. XX.
as they are commonly works of wonderful majesty
and grandeur, incomparable and inimitable for diffi-
culty : so they always are holy, always useful ; they
ever aim at good ends, and produce wholesome fruits :
hence we may discern them, and hence we are
obliged to acknowledge them ; they afford us ground
to say with the Psalmist ; *Unto thee, O Lord, we* Ps. lxxv. 1.
do give thanks ; for that thy name is near thy won-
drous works declare. Such works, as they can only
be effects of God's power, so they are arguments of
his truth ; for that he cannot lend his hand, for that
he will not prostitute his assistance to the mainte-
nance of any thing, which is not perfectly true and
good ; he will *not so tempt any man* into error. *If* James i. 13.
Luke xi. 20.
I by the finger of God cast out devils, then indeed
is the kingdom of God come unto you, (that is, if
I perform works by the divine power, then assuredly
is my doctrine true,) was an irrefragable argument.

We may also observe, that those wicked spirits
are themselves apprehensive how easily their feats
are distinguished from the works of God ; for hence,
it seems, they chose to utter them clancularly, in
obscure corners, in blind times, among barbarous
and silly people ; judging that persons of any wis-
dom or goodness will be soon able to detect them,
and ready to explode them : a little light dazzles
the powers of darkness, and scares away these spec-
tres ; a little goodness mates their force, enfeebleth
and dishearteneth them.

We may also add, that the Messias's works by a
peculiar character should be manifestly distinguish-
able from such as proceeded from infernal powers ;
for that it should be his business to impugn, defeat,

SERM. and overthrow the Devil's kingdom; all the false-
XX. hoods and superstitions, all the immoralities and im-

pieties, which it consisted in, or which supported it:
to this end all his doctrine, practice, and perform-
ances would conspiringly tend, that *Satan like light-*
Luke x. 18. *ning should be thrown down from heaven*; which
most evidently would evince, that what he should do
should only come from heaven.

Having thus shewed reasons why, and signified
to what purposes, the Messiah was to receive special
testimonies from God; let us now survey those,
which were indeed by him exhibited to Jesus our
Lord. There is indeed no kind or degree of attes-
tation needful or proper, which hath not been large-
ly from heaven afforded to him. God (so our Lord
argueth) is, in his own nature invisible and indis-
cernible to any sense of ours; neither could we en-
John v. 36, 37. dure the lustre of his immediate presence. (*No man
ever saw God, or can see him; there shall no man
see him and live.*) It must be therefore by media-
tion of signs and works supernatural; the causing
of which can only be imputed to him, as beyond the
power of any creature to effect or counterfeit; that
he can assuredly signify his mind unto us; such
only in approbation of any person, law, or doctrine,
can be expected from him; and such, in divers
kinds, and in great measures, God hath, we say,
furnished for the authorizing Jesus.

1 Tim. vi.
16.
Exod.
xxxiii. 20.

1. God did attest to him long before his coming
into the world, by presignifying and predicting con-
cerning him, at several times, in several ways, by
several persons, (even by all the prophets and emi-
nent persons among his people of old,) many things,
even all things considerable about him; in exact

congruity to the circumstances of his coming into the world, (the time when, the place where, the family whence, the manner how, the condition in which he was born,) to the qualities of his person, to the doctrine and law which he published, to all his undertakings and performances and sufferings, and to the successes consequent upon what he did. (This is a matter of very large consideration; which otherwhile we have insisted largely upon, and therefore shall now wave enlargement on it.)

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2. God did in attestation to him immediately send before his face, as his herald and harbinger, a Prophet, or one for his admirable wisdom and sanctity of life somewhat *more than a prophet*; who indeed without doing any miracle, by the prodigious integrity and strictness of his life, by the wonderful efficacy of his doctrine and discourse, procured unto himself a reputation equalling or exceeding that of any former prophet; (whom even Josephus, an indifferent historian, reporteth a man of singular goodness and great authority,) to predispose the minds of men to receive him; by converting men to a serious reflection upon their lives and amendment of their manners, to *prepare his way*; as also to point him out, to foretell of him as presently coming, to testify of him as being come. This was he, to whom it well agreed, and who plainly did assume to himself that which was written by Malachi; *Behold, I send my angel before thy face, who shall prepare thy way before thee*; of whom Isaiah (John himself being the avoucher and interpreter) said, *The voice of one crying in the wilderness, Prepare the way of the Lord, make his paths straight*; who was, as Malachi did again signify, *to come in the spirit and*

Matt. xi. 10.
John x. 41.

Mal. iii. 1.
Matt. xi. 10.

Isa. xl. 3.
John i. 23.

Mal. iv. 6.
Luke i. 17.

SERM. *power of Elias, to convert the hearts of the fathers*
 XX. *to the children, and the disobedient to the wisdom*

of the just; to make ready a people prepared for

John i. 15, *the Lord.* This most extraordinary and excellent
 26, 29, 34.
 Matt. iii. 11. person did at several times and occasions attest unto
 Luke iii. 16. Jesus, not only that he was incomparably, for the

dignity of his person and worth of his performances,
 to be preferred before himself, and consequently be-

John v. 33. fore all other prophets, but that he was the *very*
Christ, the Lamb of God, the Son of God, the Sa-
viour of the world: they sent to John, saith the
text, and he bare witness of the truth. God by

him also foretold divers things concerning our Lord,
 which did really come to pass; as those words, ut-

John x. 41. tered occasionally by many persons, do imply; *John*
indeed did no miracle; but all things which John
spake of this man were true.

3. God attested unto our Lord by visible appari-
 tions from heaven, at several times, in fit seasons,
 made in the sight and presence of very good wit-

Matt. i. 20, nesses: angels appearing warned his good father and
 24.
 Luke i. 26. blessed mother concerning the time and manner of
 Luke ii. 9, his coming into the world; angels again appearing
 &c. uttered tidings of his birth, joined with acclamations

of praise to God, and gratulations of joy to men;

Matt. ii. 13. angels were vigilant for his safety, ministered unto
 him in his temptations and needs, assisted and com-

Matt. iv. 11. forted him in the agonies of his passion, waited upon
 Luke xxii.
 43. him at his resurrection; an extraordinary star (like

that of the morning before the sun) officiously did

Matt. iii. 17. usher him into the world; at his baptism the *Holy*
 Luke iii. 22. *Ghost* (in the symbolical figure of a dove) appeared

descending, and resting upon him, in the presence
of St. John the Baptist, (that most just and holy

person, so taken and acknowledged by all men, even SERM. XX.
 by his enemies and murderers; and a most compe-
 tent witness, as who dared with utmost peril before
 the greatest persons to assert the truth;) *He testi-* John i. 31.
fied thereof, and said, I saw the Spirit of God de-
scending from heaven as a dove, and resting upon
him. Moses and Elias also (those most eminent in-
 struments of God, and illustrious representatives of
 the Messias) did from heaven in a most glorious and
 splendid manner attend upon him, in the presence
 of three most credible witnesses, Peter, James, and Matt. xvii.
 John, the apostles; one of whom doth himself thus, Luke ix. 28.
 with the due confidence of an eyewitness, report 3¹. 2 Pet. i.
 the fact; *For we have not followed cunningly de-*
vised fables, when we made known unto you the
power and presence of our Lord Jesus Christ, but
were spectators of his majesty—being with him in
the holy mountain.

4. God also by vocal attestation did expressly at
 several times own and approve Jesus: at his bap-
 tism, in the audience of St. John the Baptist and
 others present there; when, *Behold there was a* Matt. iii. 17.
voice from heaven, saying, This is my beloved Son, Luke iii. 22.
in whom I am well pleased: the like heavenly voice
 was heard at the transfiguration; *This is my beloved* Matt. xvii.
Son, in whom I am well pleased; hear him: so the Luke ix. 35.
 gospels report it; and thus St. Peter himself, a more Mark ix. 7.
 immediate witness and attendant there; *He receiv-* 2 Pet. i. 17.
ed from God the Father honour and glory, a voice
being brought unto him from the magnificent glory;
This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.
And this voice, which came from heaven, we heard,
being with him in the holy mount. Again, a little
 before his death, in presence of a multitude, upon

SERM. Jesus's prayer, that God would by him glorify his
XX. name, an audible return was made from heaven;

John xii. 28. *There came, saith the text, a voice from heaven, saying, I have both glorified it, and will again glorify it.*

5. God attested to our Lord in that he was endued with a power constantly resident in him of performing miraculous works, for nature and quality such, as could only proceed from a most divine power; not only thwarting the course of nature, but transcending the strength of any creature, and especially contrary to what any evil creature could or would perform: this was a testimony beyond any human testimony, and which our Lord insisted upon as such;

John v. 36. *I, saith he, have a greater testimony than that of*
x. 25, 38. *John; for the works which the Father hath grant-*
xiv. 11. *ed me, that I should perform them, those very works which I do, they testify about me, that the Father hath sent me.*

Works indeed he performed of a stupendous greatness and difficulty; all the creatures (the most unruly and boisterous, the most malignant and rebellious) beside their natures, and against their wills,

Matt. viii. 26. *he arose, and*
Luke viii. 24, 25. *rebuked the winds and the sea; and there became*
Matt. xiv. 26. *a great calm: so that men did marvel, saying, What*
John vi. 19. *manner of man is this, for even the winds and the*
ii. 9. iv. 52. *sea obey him! the sea stood firm for him and St.*
ix. 1. *Peter to walk upon; he turned water into good*

Matt. viii. 6. *wine; he unconceivably so improved a few loaves*
ix. 2, 20, 32. *and little fishes as to feed and satisfy multitudes,*
viii. 3. xii. 12. xv. 30. *leaving more behind than there were at first; he*
xx. 34. *cured the most incurable diseases, inveterate palsies,*
Mark ix. 5. *fluxes of blood, and leprosies; he restored senses,*

and limbs wanting from the birth, or for a long time; innumerable persons, blind, deaf, dumb, lame, and maimed, he restored to the use of their faculties, and members respectively, without any medicinal applications, or any natural means conducive to those purposes: he restored lunatic persons to their right wits, and dispossessed evil spirits, they not daring to disobey him, and acknowledging his uncontrollable authority; *They were, saith the text, amazed, insomuch that they questioned among themselves, saying, What thing is this? what new doctrine is this? for with authority he commandeth even the unclean spirits, and they do obey him.* These were indeed works of excessive grandeur and difficulty; but he did others far more great and hard; and these were greater for the manner of performing them, than in their own nature: he did other acts so great, that they were only to be done by an infinite power; and most of these he performed in a manner which argued omnipotency present with the doer.

Works proper unto God he did many; such was discerning the thoughts, reasonings, opinions, and purposes of men, however concealed or disguised, whereof we have many instances; and his intimate acquaintance, St. John, testifies of him generally, saying, *He needed not that any should witness about a man, for he knew himself what was in man.* Such was also to forgive sins, (a privilege only belonging to the supreme Lord and Lawgiver, against whom sin is committed;) the which he assumed to himself, and irreproveably maintained it by exerting a power equivalent thereto; *For whether, said he, is it easier to say, Thy sins be for-*

SERM.
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Matt. xvii.
Mark i. 27.

Matt. ix. 4.
xii. 25.
xxii. 18.
Luke xi. 17.
vi. 8.

John ii. 25.

Matt. ix. 5.

SERM. *given thee; or to say, Arise and walk? but that*
 XX. *you may know that the Son of man hath power on*
earth to forgive sins, (then saith he to the sick of
the palsy,) Arise, take up thy bed, and go to thine
house: and he arose, and departed to his house:

Matt. xvii. such it was likewise to foretell future contingen-
 12. xvi. 21. cies; this he often did; as concerning his own pas-
 xx. 17. sion and resurrection, with all the circumstances of
 xxiv. 2, 9. them; particularly the treason of Judas; (*He knew,*
 x. 17. saith St. John, *from the beginning who they were*
 xxviii. 20. *that did not believe, and who it was that should be-*
 Luke xxiv. *tray him:)* concerning St. Peter's lapse, repentance,
 27, 29. and suffering; concerning the destruction of Jeru-
 John vi. 64. salem, and utter demolishment of the temple; con-
 Chrys. tom. gospel in the world: such was the foundation of
 vi. Or. 61. the church upon a rock, against which *the gates of*
 p. 634, 638. *hell should not prevail:* such again it was to raise
 Matt. ix. 25. the dead, which he often performed; he raised the
 Luke vii. ruler's daughter, and the widow's son of Naim, and
 12. his friend Lazarus; and, *The dead are raised,* is
 John xi. 1, reckoned among the ordinary miracles done by him,
 &c. in the answer to St. John the Baptist's disciples:
 Luke vii. these were acts of divine power, which no creature,
 22. unassisted by God, could perform.

And considering the manner of performance such were both these and most of the rest; they in that respect emulating God's inimitable work of creation, and in a manner seeming to exceed it; for that it seemeth harder to produce things out of matter indisposed and repugnant, than to bring them out of mere nothing: as God by mere word and will created

things, when *he spake, and it was done; he com-* SERM. XX.
manded, and it stood fast; so did Jesus in like Ps. xxxiii. 9.
manner, by the efficacy of his command, or by ac-
tions equipollent thereto, without predisposing the
subjacent matter, or using any natural instrument,
accomplish his great and strange works: *He re-* Mark iv. 39.
buked the wind, and said to the sea, Peace, be still;
so he quelled the storm: *I will, be thou cleansed;* Luke v. 12.
so he cured the leper: *Young man, I say unto thee,* Luke vii.
Arise; so he revived the widow's son: *O woman,* Matt. xv. 14.
great is thy faith; be it unto thee as thou desir- 28.
est; so he cured the Canaanitish woman's possessed
daughter: *He cried out, Lazarus, come forth; καὶ* John xi. 43.
ἐξῆλθεν ὁ τεθνηκὼς, so the *dead man* heard his voice,
and presently *came forth* out of the grave: he said,
Ephphatha, Be opened, to the deaf man's ears; Mark vii.
they immediately heard, and obeyed: he said but 34.
one word, *Ἀνάβλεψον, See again,* to the blind man;
καὶ παραχρῆμα ἀνέβλεψε, and without more ado he *saw*
again: he did but *chide the great fever,* with which Luke iv. 39.
St. Peter's mother-in-law was troubled, *and it left*
her: he did but take the ruler's daughter by the
hand, and *the girl revived, and rose up:* he only Matt. ix. 25.
touched the two blind men's eyes, and so *their sight* Matt. ix. 29.
was restored: the woman, who had a flux of blood Luke viii. 43, 47.
for twelve years, did but touch him, *καὶ ἰάθη παρα-* Matt. ix. 22.
χρῆμα, and she thereupon *ipso facto instantly was*
healed: yea multitudes of sick persons together did
only endeavour to *touch the hem of his garment,* Matt. xiv. 26.
and as many as touched it were healed; there went Luke vi. 19.
virtue out of him, and healed them all. When he
used any thing like means, he, as St. Chrysostom ob- Chrys. in 1 Cor. i. 22.
serveth, proceeded in ways not only preternatural,

SERM. but contrary to nature ; as when he cured the blind
XX. man in St. John's Gospel, anointing his eyes with

John ix. 6. clay and spittle : διὰ πράγματος ἐπιτείνοντος τὴν πῆρσιν, ἀνεῖλε· *by a thing apt to increase (or strengthen) blindness, he took it away.* So great in nature, so high for manner of performance, were the works of our Lord ; they plainly were either the works, or they were done in the way of omnipotency.

They had also no less of goodness than of greatness divine ; they were all of them plainly works of piety, or works of charity and pity ; of a holy nature and beneficial use ; they were generally performed upon evidently reasonable occasions, or needs ; for the succour and comfort of persons in some want or distress ; or for instruction of the minds and reformation of the manners of men ; for healing the sick, feeding the hungry, easing the afflicted, restoring men to their senses, freeing them from the Devil's tyranny ; for helping men in disappointment and need, or for encouraging kindness and good neighbourhood among people, (to which purpose his first miracle done at Cana served ;) for instilling or impressing some wholesome truth, as when the fig-tree withered at his command ; for encouraging dutiful submission to governors, as when the fish was brought up with a piece of money in his mouth, furnishing him and St. Peter to pay tribute : in fine, the nature and importance of his works St. Peter thus well expressed, saying of him ; Ὅς διῆλθεν ἐν ἐργεταῖς, *Who went about doing good, (or benefiting men,) and healing all that were oppressed by the Devil ; for God was with him :* and the evangelist thus ; *Jesus went about all the cities, teaching in their synagogues,*

John ii. 3.
Matt. xxi.
19.
Matt. xvii
27.
Acts x. 38.
Matt. ix. 35.
iv. 23. xv.
30.

and preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing every sickness and every disease among the people. SERM.
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Considering which things, we may well discern by what power and to what purpose Jesus did perform his admirable works; and may repel from our hearts all the cavils or calumnies forged by malicious and vain wits (such as those of Celsus and Julian) in derogation to them; we may particularly perceive how impudently false that suggestion was of the apostate emperor; who said that Jesus, *while he lived, did nothing worthy hearing, except one suppose to heal cripples and blind folk, and to exorcise demoniacs in the villages Bethsaida and Bethany, to be great works*^d: in opposition to which kind of suggestions, and for abundant confirmation of our purpose, we may consider some advantageous circumstances and concomitances of our Lord's performances.

They were, we may observe, not some few things done at one time, or in one place, among friends and partisans; but innumerably many and frequent, (a John xxi. world of things, more than well could be recited, as ²⁵ St. John telleth us,) done through a long course of time, (for some years together,) in several places, before all sorts of people, many of them very ill-affected towards him. They *were not done* clancu- Acts xxvi. larly *in a blind corner*, among rude and simple people; but openly and visibly every where about Judæa, the most lightsome place for knowledge and ²⁶

^d Ἐργασάμενος παρ' ὃν ἔζη χρόνον οὐδὲν ἀκοῆς ἄξιον, εἰ μὴ τις οἶεται τοὺς κυλλοὺς, καὶ κωφοὺς ἰᾶσθαι, καὶ τοὺς δαιμονῶντας ἐξορκίζειν ἐν Βεθσαιδᾷ, καὶ ἐν Βηθανίᾳ ταῖς κώμαις τῶν μεγίστων ἔργων εἶναι. Cyr. adv. Jul. lib. 6.

SERM. goodness in the world ; where the best worship of
 XX. God most flourished, and all diabolical impostures
 were most detested, in the places there most public
 and conspicuous ; so he could affirm and admonish
 John xviii. them ; *I spake freely to the world ; I always*
 20. *taught in the synagogues, and in the temple,*
where the Jews from all places resort ; and in
secret have I done nothing : they were done so
 apparently, that the people generally saw them, and
 acknowledged them ; that scarce any man could be
 ignorant of them ; that the most learned and con-
 siderate men took it for granted, that they were
 done ; that adversaries could not deny the perform-
 ance of them, although out of envy and ill-will they
 were ready to impute it to the worst causes devis-
 able ; that many of all sorts were convinced, and di-
 vers converted by them : as for the people, *Great*
 Matt. xv. *multitudes*, saith St. Matthew, one present, and a
 30, 31. *follower of our Lord, came unto him, having with*
them those that were lame, blind, dumb, maimed,
and many others, and cast them down at Jesus's
feet ; and he healed them : insomuch that the mul-
titude wondered, when they saw the dumb to speak,
the maimed to be whole, the lame to walk, and the
blind to see ; and they glorified the God of Israel :
 Matt. ix. and, *The people marvelled, saying, It was never so*
 33, 34. *seen in Israel ; but the Pharisees said, He casteth*
out devils by the prince of the devils : the matter
 of fact they could not offer, against conviction of
 sense, to question ; but malice prompted perversely
 and foolishly to assign a bad cause thereof : the
 matter was so notorious, that St. Peter could thus
 confidently appeal to the whole nation ; *Ye men of*
 Acts ii. 22. *Israel, hear these words ; Jesus of Nazareth, a*
 ἀποδιδύ-
 μινος.

man approved (or demonstrated) unto you by mi- SERM.
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racles, and wonders, and signs, which God did by
him in the midst of you ; as you yourselves know.
 The adversaries (such whom superstitious prejudices,
 obstinate humours, or corrupt affections, envy, pride,
 ambition, avarice, or the like, had made adversaries
 to him) did not only see the thing, but were affright-
 ed with its consequence ; *The chief priests,* it is John xi. 47.
said, and the Pharisees gathered a counsel toge-
ther, and said ; What shall we do, for this man
doeth many wonders ? if we let him alone, all men
will believe on him : yes indeed, notwithstanding all
 this watchful caution and fine policy of theirs, not-
 withstanding all the opposition and discouragement
 they could interpose, all their strugglings to smother
 his credit and doctrine, many were in their hearts
 convinced, even divers of such as were unwilling to
 believe, and ashamed or afraid to avow their persua-
 sion ; *Also,* it is said again, *of the rulers many be-* John xii.
lieved on him ; but because of the Pharisees they ^{42.}
did not confess it, lest they should be put out of the
synagogue : Nicodemus, an honest and ingenuous
 person, a man of honour, (but somewhat wary and
 timorous,) came secretly, and in the name (it seem-
 eth) of many persons alike disposed with himself
 thus spake : *Rabbi, we know that thou hast come a* John iii. 2.
teacher from God ; for no man can do those things
which thou doest, except God be with him. As for
 the generality of the people, (the most unconcerned
 in such cases as to point of honour and interest, and
 thence the most impartial and sincere party,) they
 following their senses were greatly affected and as-
 tonished with what he did ; taking him for a very
 extraordinary person ; some in a gross and confused

SERM. manner, others in a more distinct way of belief;

XX. *Some said he was John the Baptist; others, that*

Mark xvi. *he was Elias; others, Jeremiah, or one of the an-*
 14.
 Luke ix. 19. *cient prophets risen up again: but many of the*
 John vii. 31. *people (more fully and exactly) believed on him,*
 ii. 23. *saying, When Christ cometh, will he do more mi-*
racles than this man hath done?

We may also observe, that Jesus did not affect to perform wonders out of vanity, or to humour men's curiosity, but always upon inducements of piety and charity: most of them were performed occasionally at the desire of men, suggested by their needs; and all of them for their edification or comfort; that he therefore did not seek by them to acquire reputation, or applause to himself; nor by them designed to advance any private interest of his own, but singly aimed at the promotion of God's glory in them all: that in effect no secular advantage of dignity or wealth or pleasure did from them accrue to himself; but rather disgrace and obloquy, hatred and enmity, trouble and pain, did from them befall him; all the glory of them purely coming to God, and all the benefit to men. As he charged his disciples, so he practised himself, doing all *gratis*, and freely, without expecting or accepting any requital. He often studiously concealed his miracles, forbidding those who were concerned in them, or conscious of them, to publish them; so striving to decline or to stifle the honour, naturally emergent from them. When it was necessary or expedient they should appear, he disclaimed being the principal author of them, referring and ascribing them to God: *I can*, said he, *do nothing of myself*: and, *The word that I speak to you, I speak not of myself; but the Fa-*

Matt. x. 8.

Matt. viii.

4. xii. 16.

ix. 30.

Mark v. 43.

vii. 36. viii.

26.

John v. 41.

viii. 49, 50.

54, 24. v.

30. xiv. 10.

ther who abides in me, he doeth the works: and, I seek not mine own glory; I receive not glory of men: thus he professed, and so he practised: consequently the effect was, that (as it is expressed in the Gospels) fear, or a pious reverence, did seize all men; and they glorified God, saying, That a great Prophet is risen up among us; and, That God hath visited his people: All the people seeing it gave praise to God: All men were amazed at the mighty power (or majesty) of God: When the multitude saw it, they marvelled, and glorified God, which had given such power unto men. And doth not so much glory from his performances resulting to God, so good an influence upon the hearts of men, evidently shew whence the power effecting them was derived? would the Devil be such an instrument of God's praise?

SERM. XX.
Luke vii. 16. ix. 43. xviii. 43. Matt. ix. 8. xv. 30. Ἐπὶ τῇ μεγαλειότητι.

We may also with St. Irenæus observe, that Jesus, in performing his cures and other miraculous works, did never use any profane, silly, phantastic ceremonies; any muttering of barbarous names or insignificant phrases; any invocation of spirits, or inferior powers; any preparatory purgations, any mysterious circumstances of proceeding, apt to amuse people; any such unaccountable methods or instruments, as magicians, enchanter, diviners, circulatorious jugglers, and such emissaries of the Devil, or self-seeking impostors, are wont to use; but did proceed altogether in a most innocent, simple, and grave manner, with a majestic authority and clear sincerity, becoming such an agent of God as he professed himself to be.

That also the whole tenor of his proceedings was directly levelled against the kingdom of darkness;

SERM. against all the impiety, all the malice, all the filthi-
XX. ness, and all the fallacy thereof; at the casting wick-

Luke xi. 21.
 Matt. xii.
 29.

ed and impure spirits, not only from the bodies, but out of the souls of men; causing men not only to detest and defy them, but to loathe their qualities, and to eschew their works: this is that binding, disarming, rifling, and dispossessing *the strong one*, which Jesus alleged as an infallible argument, that he was not only no friend, but a mighty enemy to the infernal powers; an enemy, not only in disposition and design quite contrary, but in virtue and force highly superior to them: that we should worship God alone with most hearty reverence and love; that we should bear the same clear good-will to all men as we do to ourselves; that we should be strictly just, veracious, and sincere in our words and dealings, meek and humble in our spirits, pure and sober in all our enjoyments, (things perfectly opposite to the temper and interests of hell,) were things, which as our Lord constantly in his doctrine did inculcate, so he countenanced and furthered them by his works; from whence assuredly we may collect, that they came from heaven, and were intended for the promoting God's service: hell would never contribute so much to its own disgrace and disadvantage, would never so industriously concur to defeat and destroy itself; God plainly reaped the benefit by Jesus's works, he therefore certainly did plant them and bless them.

Tertull.
 Apol. 23.

Upon these considerations it appeareth sufficiently, that in correspondence to the reason and exigency of the case, our Lord did perform innumerable works, which had impressed on them the truest and highest characters of divinity; the most peculiar grandeur,

and perfectest goodness ; the purest holiness of design, and the beneficial tendency proper to the works issuing from divine power ; so that supposing God should send the Messias into the world, or any great ambassador from himself, he could scarce possibly, he should not at least, all things considered, need to furnish him with more convincing attestations, than he hath exhibited to our Lord. Whence we may well apprehend the validity of that argument, which our Lord himself suggested for assurance of St. John the Baptist in his opinion concerning him, or rather for the satisfaction of St. John's disciples ; when John sent two of his disciples, with this inquiry, *Art thou he, or look we for another?* Jesus thus replied ; *Go your way, and tell John what things ye have seen and heard ; how that the blind see, the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, to the poor the gospel is preached ; and blessed is he, whoever shall not be offended in me.* Matt. xi. 5. Luke vii. 22.

6. God most signally did attest to our Lord by miraculously raising him from the dead ; or in that by a divine power he raised up himself from the grave ; which work, for the singular greatness and high consequence thereof, together with the certain evidence that it was really performed, might alone suffice to confirm the verity of all our Lord's pretences ; [that he was the true *Messias*, the *Son of God*, the *Saviour of the world*, the *Lord of all things*, the *Judge of all the world* ;] most efficaciously to evince and persuade the most eminent and important parts of his doctrine, (the immortality of our souls, the resurrection of our bodies, the just and wise providence of God over men, the

SERM. dispensation of rewards and punishments hereafter,
 XX. answerable to men's conversation and practice in
 this life.) This indeed is the point, which invincibly
 guardeth and fortifieth all other testimonies ; but it
 is so pregnant of considerations belonging to it, that
 it deserveth more time and room than we now can
 yield it ; wherefore we choose rather at present to
 pass it over, than slightly to touch it, reserving it
 for a peculiar subject of discourse.

7. A further attestation was given to our Lord
 by the power of doing miracles in his name impart-
 ed to the disciples ; who by him were appointed and
 authorized to prosecute the great design commenced
 by himself : not only his person, but even his name
 did great wonders ; it cured diseases, it cast out de-
 vils, it surmounted nature, and subdued hell : where-
 by he indeed appears, for especial favour with God,
 personal excellency, dignity of office, importance of
 undertaking, incomparably to have surpassed all for-
 mer prophets and commissioners of God, by whose
 ministry any law, covenant, or doctrine, hath been
 conveyed to men ; never by delegation or in depend-
 ence upon any other person, never in any other per-
 son's name, were such works done. To the twelve
 apostles at their first mission he among other in-
 structions enjoined thus ; *Cure the sick, cleanse the
 lepers, cast out devils ; ye have freely received,
 freely give :* to the seventy disciples, sent out by
 himself to instil the rudiments of his doctrine, and
 to admonish people of his approach, he gave this
 commission and charge ; *In any city into which you
 enter, heal those which are sick therein ; and say
 unto them, The kingdom of heaven is come near
 unto you :* he then adds ; *Behold, I give you power*

Omnis hæc
 nostra in
 illos domi-
 natio et po-
 testas de
 Christi no-
 minatione
 valet, &c.
Tert. Apol.
 23.
Acts iii. 16.

Matt. x. 8.

*Luke x. 8,
 9, 19.*

to tread upon serpents and scorpions, and upon SERM. XX.
all the power of the enemy: the success was, that
they returned with joy, saying, Lord, even the Luke x. 17.
devils are subject unto us through thy name. At
his departure he promised and foretold thus; These Mark xvi.
signs shall follow them that believe; In my name ^{17.}
they shall cast out devils; they shall speak with
*new tongues; they shall *take up serpents; and* * 'Agōvri.
if they drink any deadly thing, it shall not hurt
them; they shall lay hands on the sick, and they
shall recover: all which things were abundantly
fulfilled; for a liberal communication of divine power
was granted to them, enabling them to perform the
greatest works; so that, as St. Luke telleth us, by Acts ii. 4,
the hands of the apostles many wonders and signs ^{43. v. 12.}
were done among the people; the performance of
which was so notorious, that upon knowledge, and
in confidence thereof, there came, saith the holy Luke vi. 17,
historian, a multitude out of the cities round about ^{18.}
unto Jerusalem, bringing sick folks, and them Acts viii.
which were vexed with unclean spirits, and they ^{17.}
*were healed every one. *The like power also was* * Heb. ii. 4.
by the apostles derived unto others, in such kind Rom. xv. 18.
and measure, as the carrying on Jesus's great design
(the propagation of God's truth and the edification
of his church) did require; by succession it was
transmitted through several ages, and visibly con-
tinued so long, as such extraordinary means were
useful or expedient for the conviction and conver-
sion of the world; most of the first Fathers of the
church do expressly testify concerning remainders
thereof in their times: It is not possible (saith St. Iren. ii. 48.
Irenæus for one instance, among others innumerable)
to tell the number of the graces (or special gifts)

SERM. XX. *which the church through the whole world receiving from God doth, in the name of Jesus Christ, crucified under Pontius Pilate, daily perform for the succour of the nations, &c. And remarkable is the confidence of Tertullian, reporting the effects of this power in his time : he in his apologetic speech for the Christians even dares to provoke the ethnic governors to trial, and to lay the issue concerning not only the truth of Christian doctrine, but the lives and safety of its professors thereon ; Let, saith he, any person, manifestly possessed with the Devil, or one who is deemed to be rapt with a divine fury, be set before your tribunals ; that spirit, being commanded by a Christian to speak, shall as truly there confess himself to be a devil, as elsewhere a god—If he do not so confess, not daring to lie, even there spill the blood of that procacious Christian : What, adds he, is more manifest than that work ? what more faithful than that probation ? Stand not to these sayings, if your eyes and ears will suffer you. The like assertions and challenges might be produced out of divers other Fathers.*

Τῆς δυνάμε-
ως τῶν ση-
μαίων οὐδ' ἔχ-
ουσι ὑπολί-
λυσται.
Chrys. de
Sacerd. 4.
in Joh. Or.
24. in Psal.
142. Aug.
de Bapt. iii.
16. Retract.
i. 13.

Neither perhaps is the communication of this divine virtue so ceased now, that it would be wanting upon any needful occasion ; the frequent performance of such works among them in whom faith by abundance of other competent means may be produced and confirmed, unto whom also the first miracles are virtually present by the help of history and good reason, is indeed nowise necessary, nor perhaps would be convenient ; but did the same pious zeal for God's honour, and the same charitable earnestness for men's good, excite any persons now to attempt the conversion of infidels to the sincere

Christian truth, I see no reason to doubt, but that **SERM.**
such persons would be enabled to perform whatever **XX.**
miraculous works should conduce to that purpose;
for *the Lord's hand is not shortened*, the grace of **Isa. lix. 1.**
Christ is not straitened, the name of Jesus hath not **1. 2.**
lost its virtue.

8. God did attest to our Lord by accomplishing **The Spirit**
his prediction and promise, in a plentiful *effusion **of God doth**
of the divine Spirit upon his church and disciples, **attest to**
for their perfect instruction and guidance, for their **him.**
support and comfort, for enabling them to convince **John xv. 26.**
and convert men to him; *When* (said our Lord to **Acts v. 32.**
them before his decease, concerning this attestation) **1 John v.**
the Comforter is come, whom I will send to you **7, 8.**
from my Father, even the Spirit of truth, which **1 Cor. xii.**
proceedeth from the Father, he shall testify of me: *** Acts x. 45.**
and, *Tarry ye* (said he again, after his resurrection) **John xv.**
in the city of Jerusalem, until ye be endued with **26.**
power from on high. **1 John v.**
 7, 8.
 Luke xxiv.
 49.
 Acts i. 4.
 ii. 33.
 Acts iv. 31.
 viii. 17. x.
 44. xi. 15.
 xiii. 52. xix.
 6.

Accordingly soon after our Lord's ascension, as **1 Cor. xii.—**
the Holy Spirit was conspicuously dispensed, upon
various occasions, in divers proportions, and in dif-
ferent ways, according to the exigencies of things,
for the edification and enlargement of the church;
so especially at Pentecost it was in a most solemn
manner and abundant measure poured forth upon
the whole church and each member of it; **For** **Acts i. 15.**
then, saith St. Luke, *the disciples (to the number*
of one hundred and twenty persons) being gathered
together—with one accord, in one place;—suddenly **Acts ii. 1—**
there came a sound from heaven as of a rushing
***mighty wind,* (which was a most proper emblem of**
the Holy Spirit's nature and powerful efficacy,) **and**

SERM. *it filled all the house where they were sitting,*
 XX.

Μεγέθυναί
 διὰ τὸ χάρι-
 μάτων δια-
 φων. Ναζ.
 Orat. 44.

(which then typified the catholic church, through which the Holy Spirit was to be diffused, to animate and actuate it;) *and there appeared unto them cloven tongues like as of fire,* (denoting the various gifts and graces imparted for expression of God's praise and propagation of his truth, which were to be enlivened by fervent charity, zeal, and devotion,) *and it sat upon each of them;* implying that every faithful Christian constantly should partake of this heavenly benefit, according to his need; *and they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance:* that is, they were perfectly inspired, so that each was endowed with the gift of speaking a language before unknown to him; which was a miracle very great, and most pertinent; to learn a strange tongue requiring much time and great pains; the speaking such tongues being then very serviceable to the promulgation of the gospel: all which event was very public and notorious; for that at that festival-time *there were*, saith the divine historian, *dwelling at Jerusalem, Jews, devout men, out of every nation under heaven. Now when this was noised about, the multitude came together, and were confounded, because that every man heard them speak in his own language—the wonderful things of God.*

This was therefore a general attestation to our Lord, pregnant and clear as could be, both for conviction of unbelievers and confirmation of the faithful; the which effects it had; so that in virtue thereof, St. Peter having explained the design of it,

three thousand souls were added to the church; and all did continue stedfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship.

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Acts ii. 41,
42.

Besides also it was an illustrious pledge of that inestimable gift, to be perpetually communicated to the church for its edification, and to each Christian for his direction and assistance in religious practice, according to the evangelical covenant; the which is a standing witness, attesting to our Lord, in the heart and conscience of every good man, according to that of St. Peter; *And we are his witnesses of these things; and so is the Holy Ghost, whom God hath given to them that obey him:* he indeed keeping his residence and exerting his power in all pious souls; shining into their minds with *the true heavenly light*, (that pure and perfect wisdom, which is from above;) kindling charity, devotion, comfort, and joy in their hearts; supporting them in trials and temptations; raising their affections and desires above this present transitory world; disposing them to relish spiritual things, and to entertain themselves with the hopes of future blessedness; doth assure them, that *Jesus is the Lord*; doth seal to them the truth of his doctrine, the reality of his promises, the efficacy of his grace, the wonderful greatness of his love and goodness toward them; so that hence that is abundantly verified which St. John telleth us, *He that believeth on the Son of God hath the witness in himself.*

Acts v. 32.

Eph. i. 18.
2 Cor. iv. 6.

1 Cor. xii. 3.
Rom. viii. 16.

Gal. iv. 6.
2 Cor. i. 22.
iv. 2. v. 5.
Eph. i. 13.
iv. 30.
1 John v. 10.

There are divers other considerable attestations to our Lord; such as the divine sublimity of his doctrine, discovering itself to enlightened minds to shine from heaven; the testimony of God's Spirit to the hearts and consciences of good and faithful

SERM. XX. people, assuring them that *Jesus is the Lord*, and sealing to them the truth of his doctrine; the operation of God's grace in production of moral virtues, or the purgation of heart and amendment of life flowing from faith in him, the efficacy of prayers in his name offered to God; all the joys, and comforts, and happy fruits springing from Christian devotion; the good effects the gospel hath had in reformation of the world inducing many great benefits, and preventing mischiefs therein: but these and the like, being not so public, so distinctly observable, so easily drawn into argument, apt to convince the incredulous, I shall pass over; adding but one more of a more general and conspicuous nature.

Rom. viii.
16.

Gal. iv. 6.

2 Cor. i. 22.

v. 5. iv. 2.

Eph. i. 13.

iv. 30.

1 Cor. xii. 3.

1 John v.

10.

Ὁ πιστεύων

εἰς τὸν υἱὸν

τοῦ Θεοῦ ἔχει

τὴν μαρτυρίαν

αὐτοῦ ἐν ἑαυτῷ.

9. Lastly, God hath attested unto our Lord by the wonderful success which hath attended his gospel in its conveyance and propagation: its, in so short a time, so generally prevailing in the hearts of men, triumphing over the mightiest oppositions, subduing the world to the faith and obedience of itself, accomplished by means to appearance so insufficient, and by ways so improbable, may seem to reason no less a miracle of Providence against the course of human affairs, than the rest performed by him, or for him, were miracles to sense, above the power of natural causes, both arguing the presence and assistance of omnipotency: the work was *a victory over the world* and over hell, achieved *by the faith of Jesus*; and that a very strange one, whether we consider the combatants who fought for him, or the adversaries against whom, or the weapons by which, or the manner how they strove, or the very cause itself, which they maintained for him.

They were *not many wise, not many mighty, not many noble, but a very few, mean and poor, un-* SERM. XX.
 learned and simple men, whom no outward circum- 2 Cor. i. 26.
 stances commended to human regard, no worldly Ἀγέρμα-
 advantage furthered in pursuance of their design, τοι, καὶ ἰδιώ-
 who had nothing visible to rely on, to hearten, to τοι.
 support them in their endeavours: a few fishermen, Acts iv. 13.
 publicans, tent-makers, and other persons of like
 quality, education, improvement, and capacity, were
 the instruments of this great work; those brave
 soldiers of Christ, who boldly set themselves in array
 against all his adversaries: and what adversaries
 were they? who, but all the majesty and authority,
 all the force and violence, all the policy and craft,
 all the wit, learning, wisdom, and eloquence, all the
 passion and rage of men, all the power, cunning,
 and malice of the cursed spirits; in short, all the
 forces and endeavours of earth and hell combined
 against them*. They were to check and control
 the ambitions, interests, pleasures of mighty em-
 perors and potentates; whose assumed divine ho-
 nours they decried as vain and wicked; whose com-
 mands they reprehended as unjust and impious; to
 whose power and pleasure they prescribed restraints,
 declaring them obliged to contain their practice
 within bounds of piety, equity, and temperance:
 they were to suppress the credit and the gain of all
 priests or ministers of religion in the world, whose

* Clemens Alexandrinus well says, that no philosophy would have endured such a test, or endured such a shock of persecu-
 tion.

Καὶ τὴν μὲν φιλοσοφίαν τὴν ἐλληνικὴν εἰς τὸν οὐρανὸν ἀνελθούσαν, οἴκεται
 παραχρῆμα, τὴν δὲ ἡμετέραν, &c. Strom. vi. (p. 502.)

Καίτοι γε μυρίων ὄσων κωλυμάτων γενομένων πρὸς τὸ μὴ ἐπισπαρῆναι τὴν
 Ἰησοῦ διδασκαλίαν τῇ οἰκουμένῃ. Orig. cont. Cels. vii. (p. 349.)

SERM. doctrines they condemned as vain and silly, whose
XX. practices they reprov'd as vile and damnable: they were to confute all the subtilty of philosophers, all the eloquence of orators, all depths of learning, and improvements of reason or wit; impugning the opinions famous and current among men as false, or slighting them as frivolous: they were to overbear and master the prejudices of all people, fortified by natural inclination and temper, by countenance of long tradition and custom; by education, by public laws, and all so mighty enforcements: they were to charge with reproach all ages past, and the ancestors of all people in the world, (those of one small people only in part excepted,) of very gross ignorance and error, of sottish folly, of heinous wickedness and impiety: they were to sustain all the slanders, reproaches, and persecutions which the resolute opposing so many interests, humours, and opinions inevitably would produce: they were beside vigorously to assault Satan and all his complices; to beat down his worship, and overturn his domination; to baffle all his craft and might, to stop his mouth, to bind his hands, to tread upon his neck.

All these great exploits they were to achieve in a most quiet and peaceable manner, in a way most plain and simple, without any terror or tumult, any sleight or artifice, any plausibility of language, or subtilty of reasoning; without applying either any rude violence or sly allurement: they were indeed little more than barely to report a story, and to affirm it true of their own knowledge, adjoining in connection with that story some plain honest rules of life here in this world, and denouncing some consequences on the belief of their story and the prac-

tice of their rules in another world hereafter. These things it was their business to tell simply, and to aver confidently, charging men at their utmost peril to believe them; boldly condemning whatever thing and what person soever should oppose their report or doctrine: they were not to assay the persuading this or dissuading from the contrary by fine strains of speech, or with acute *enthymemes*; but to propose it without care or circumstance, in such a homely dress and naked plainness of speech, that even children and idiots might easily comprehend the main of their sense and drift: all the strength, the ornament, the charm of their discourse consisted in the clear sincerity shining through it; joined with a constant adherence to their doctrine, an earnest diligence in promoting it, an admirable patience in joyfully suffering all contumelies and adversities incident to them for its sake; accompanied also with a blameless innocence and integrity of life, a sweet calmness of mind and meekness of behaviour, together with a kind and charitable disposition toward all men: these were all the human or natural *weapons of their warfare*; with which alone, God's help concurring, they did (to use St. Paul's words) *pull down strong holds, and cast down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God; bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ*: in this strange manner did they maintain their cause:

A cause indeed, which of itself did not seem likely to prosper in the world, having in itself so little of plausibility, and affording to the embracers thereof so very small encouragement: which enjoined to its

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1 Cor. iv. 5.
2 Cor. iv. 7.
xii. 9.

1 Cor. ii. 4.

2 Cor. x. 4.

Vide Chrys.
tom. vi. Or.
61. p. 635.

SERM. followers the worship and imitation of a Person
 XX. lying under extreme disadvantages in the eye of man ; who had lived in a very mean condition, and had suffered a most ignominious death ; whom therefore to be obliged to adore and obey could not but to the ordinary sense of men appear very offensive : which again recommended a doctrine little grateful, or rather very cross, to the natural propensions, to the current principles, to the secular advantages of men ; which indulged men in nothing that they were apt to like, but greatly curbed and checked them in the use of their liberties, gratification of their fancies, and enjoyment of their pleasures ; which much disparaged all the pleasing goods, and all the flattering glories of the world ; charging men never much to affect or seek them, sometimes utterly to quit and renounce them ; freely choosing in their stead to undertake a cross with all its pains and disgraces, which propounded it as an essential ingredient of itself, or a condition necessary for all that should avow it, to *circumcise the heart*, to *mortify the deeds of the body*, to *crucify the flesh with its affections and lusts* ; to *cut off right hands*, and *pull out right eyes* ; to part with all their fortunes, to hate their relations, to sacrifice their lives, if they were thereto called, for its sake ; which rendered men, as it were, dead to all present fruitions, and unconcerned in all hopes here ; engaging them entirely to place their contents and happiness in a reversion of things invisible and future : they, in fine, did hold forth a doctrine to the sense of flesh and blood full of most rigid laws, severe rules, harsh conditions, and *hard sayings*, apt to choke the faith of men, and to obstruct its entertainment with them.

Rom. viii.

13.
Gal. v. 24.

Now that a handful of such persons, against SERM. XX. such obstacles, in ways so preposterous, and different from the course of human proceedings, were able to render so unlikely a cause so absolutely victorious; so that suddenly all the might, wit, and eloquence of men did stoop unto it, and serve under it; that the majesty of the greatest princes gladly veiled thereto, that the prudence of statesmen cordially did approve it, that all the learning of the world yielded itself up captive and tributary thereto, that all superstition vanished before it, and all the force of hell sunk under it; is it not a huge argument, that God himself did in favour thereof interpose his omnipotent arm; that to the Lord of hosts (*unto whom*, as king Asa said, *it is nothing to help, whether with many, or with them that have no power*: to whom it is indifferent *to save by many or by few*) this glorious victory is to be ascribed, who thereby pleased to accomplish his ancient promises, to maintain his holy truth, to further the salvation of his creatures, to promote his own glory, and especially to magnify the name of his only beloved Son Jesus, our ever blessed Lord? *to whom for ever and ever be all praise.* Amen.

Having thus largely endeavoured to shew that Jesus our Lord is the Messias, and consequently supposing the truth of the Christian doctrine; let us

Τὸ ῥῆμα ἐκεῖνο, τὸ οἰκοδομήσει μου τὴν ἐκκλησίαν, τοῦτο πάντα εἰργάσατο, τοιοῦτοι γὰρ οἱ τοῦ Θεοῦ λόγοι, ἔργων δημιουργοὶ, ἔργων θαυμαστῶν καὶ παραδόξων, &c. Chrys. tom. vi. Oral. 61. p. 636.

Πῶς οὖν τοσαύτων πρᾶγμα μετὰ τοσούτων κωλυμάτων καὶ πέρας ἔσχευ ᾧτω λαμπρὸν, καὶ ἔκβασιν μαρτυροῦσαν τῇ ἀληθείᾳ, εἰ μὴ θεία τις καὶ ἄμαχος δύναμις ἦν τοῦ ταῦτα εἰπόντος, καὶ τελέσαντος, &c. ibid. p. 637.

SERM. now briefly recapitulate and explain in what manner
 XX. and in what respects the New Testament represents him as *Christ*; how, according to that, Jesus was signally chosen and consecrated by God, in a manner supereminent, to all the offices denoted by the title *Christ*, (the office *prophetical*, *regal*, and *sacerdotal*,) and how he effectually doth execute them.

Acts x. 38. Him, saith St. Peter in general, God anointed with the Holy Spirit and power: God anointed him, not with an external affusion of material oil, (as neither were the patriarchs, nor king Cyrus, who are yet called *the Christs of God*;) that was only a ritual and symbolical business; but with a real infusion of divine grace and power, qualifying and enabling him perfectly to execute all those great and extraordinary functions. With this gladsome oil he was thoroughly anointed and replenished above measure: with this he was *sanctified from the womb*; when the *power of the Highest did overshadow him* at his conception: with this at his baptism he was solemnly and visibly inaugurated; when *the heavens were opened* unto him, and *the Spirit of God descended upon him as a dove, and came upon him*: with this in all the course of his life and ministry he was continually accompanied; the virtue of it being discovered and diffused in most sensible effects of wise and gracious discourse, holy and blameless conversation, wonderful and glorious performances, for the honour of God and the benefit of mankind, to the delight and consolation of all well-disposed minds: *God anointed Jesus of Nazareth*, saith St. Peter in the Acts, *with the Holy Ghost; who went about doing good, and healing all that were oppressed of the Devil; for God was with*

Ps. xlv. 7.
 Luke iv. 1.
 John iii. 34.
 Luke ii. 35.

Matt. iii. 16.

Acts x. 38.

him. He was by this spiritual unction constituted **SERM.**
in right and in effect a *Prophet*, a *King*, a *Priest*. **XX.**

1. First, a *Prophet*: for they were not mistaken, John vi.
who, upon his raising the widow's child, were *amaz-* Luke vii. 16.
ed, and glorified God, saying, That a great Pro-
phet was raised up among them, and that God had
visited his people. Nor they (in St. John's Gospel)
who, reflecting upon another great miracle, (feeding
multitudes with five loaves and two little pickled
fishes,) brake into this confession; *This is in truth* John vi. 14.
that Prophet who was to come into the world.

And the disciples well described him, who styled
him, a *Prophet mighty in word and deed, before* Luke xxiv.
God and all the people. He was so, as having an 19.
extraordinary commission from God, declared by Εἰς ὑμῶν πα-
vocal attestation of God himself from heaven, by θηγενῆς, ὁ
express testimony of St. John the Baptist, (the per- Χριστός.
son of most remarkable sanctity and greatest au- Matt. xxiii.
thority in his time,) by the performance of innu- 8.
merable and incomparable signs and works miracu-
lous; (arguments in the highest degree and to the
utmost possibility sufficient to assert and confirm
it.) He was also in greatest perfection qualified for
the exercise of that function, by inspiration complete 1 Pet. ii. 22.
and unlimited; by disposition of mind altogether pure 2 Cor. v. 21.
and holy; (expressed in a continual practice of life 1 John iii.
void of all sin and guile; by an insuperable courage 5.
and constancy, a transcendent wisdom and discretion,
an incomparable meekness and patience, a most win-
ning sweetness and goodness, a most powerful aw-
fulness and majesty, shining in all his discourse and
demeanour.)

Suitable also to the authority of his commission
and the qualifications of his person, were the weight

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and the extent of the doctrine he in God's name revealed; it concerning no less than the salvation of mankind, and reconciliation of the world to God; the entire will of God, and whole duty of man; with all the laws and precepts, the covenants and conditions, the promisings and threatenings, relating to our future state. He did not (as other prophets have done) prophesy about the constitution of one particular law, religion, or covenant; about the reproof or reformation of one state, the judgment or fate determined to one nation; but his design reached to the instruction and conversion of all people, in all places, through all times, to the settling of a law and covenant absolutely universal and perpetual: mysteries he brought forth never before revealed, and decrees never to be reversed; to the final doom of all the world did his prophetic denunciations extend. So is he a *Prophet*. Such he was in his temporal appearance and administrations upon earth; and such he continues for ever in heaven; from thence upon all occasions by his holy Spirit imparting to his faithful people all needful instruction in truth, direction in practice, admonition to duty, and comfort in trouble. He is also such by the ministry of his servants, whom he hath appointed, and whom he assists, to instruct and guide us.

2. He is also a *King*, by many unquestionable titles, of a great and extensive authority, exercising it to the best effects and purposes. He is a King by *nature* and *birth*; as *the only Son of God*, partaker of his eternal power and majesty; for therefore to him it was said, *Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever; the sceptre of thy kingdom is a right sceptre*: and as *the Son of David*; for of him

Heb. i. 8.
Isa. ix. 6.

the angel said, *The Lord God shall give unto him* SERM. XX.
the throne of David his Father, and he shall reign
over the house of David for ever ; and of his king- Luke i. 32.
dom there shall be no end. He is also a King by
divine designation and appointment. For, *Let all* Acts ii. 36.
the house of Israel, saith St. Peter, know assuredly,
that God hath made him Lord and Christ ; and,
The Father hath given him authority to execute John v. 22,
judgment, because he is the Son of man (or as such). 27. Heb. i. 2.
He is also King by *merit* and *purchase* ; for, *he for* ii. 9. Phil. ii. 8.
the suffering of death was crowned with glory and ἡμεῖς ὑμῶν ἁγίων.
honour ; he was obedient to death, even the death
of the cross ; therefore God super-exalted him,
and bestowed on him a namē above every name.
To this end he both died and rose again, that he Rom. xiv. 9.
might lord it over both the dead and living. He ἡμεῖς ὑμῶν.
is King also by *conquest* ; having delivered us out of Col. i. 13.
the power of darkness, and freed us from the vas- ii. 15.
salage of sin ; having spoiled principalities and
powers, made a show of them openly, and triumph-
ed over them ; having delivered us from our ene- Luke i. 71,
mies, and from the hand of all that hate us ; that 74. Tit. ii. 14.
we being delivered from our enemies, might serve Rom. vi. 22.
him without fear, in holiness and righteousness John viii.
before him all the days of our life. He is also a
King by our *election* and free choice, we having Matt. xi.
voluntarily put ourselves under his protection, and 29.
submitted to his command, and taken upon ourselves
his yoke, and vowed everlasting fealty to him in our
baptism. Such a right he hath of governing.

As for the *extent* of his *kingdom*, it is in all re-
spects boundless, both for place and time ; it is uni-
versal and perpetual. He is the eternal King of all
the world : God hath so exalted him and given him Phil. ii. 8.

SERM. *a name above all names, that to the name of Jesus*
 XX. *every knee should bend, whether of things in hea-*

Rev. v. 13.
 xix. 16. i. 5.
 xvii. 12.

ven, or things upon earth, or things under the earth. To him that sitteth on the throne, and to the Lamb, by every creature in heaven, and in the earth, and under the earth, are jointly to be ascribed the blessing, and the honour, and the glory, and

Eph. i. 21.
 Col. ii. 10.

1 Tim. vi.

15.

Mat. xxviii.

18. xi. 27.

John iii. 35.

xiii. 3. xvii.

2.

Eph. i. 22.

Acts xx. 28.

the power, for ever and for ever. He is constituted above all rule, and authority, and domination, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but in that which is to come:

it is his just title and proper badge, The King of kings, and Lord of lords; to whom all nations are vassals, yea all creatures are subject and tributary.

But he in especial manner is King over his church; that peculiar people, whom he hath especially purchased to himself by his merits and blood; whom he hath subdued to his obedience by the sword of his word, and by the prevailing virtue of his Spirit;

Ps. cxxxii.

13.

Rev. iii. 12.

xxi. 2.

Heb. xii.

22.

Gal. iv. 26.

Eph. ii. 19.

i. 22.

that mystical Zion, in which it is said that God will place his reign and residence for ever; that heavenly city, whereof all the saints are fellow-citizens, and he the sovereign Head and Governor; God hath, saith St. Paul, put all things under his feet, and hath given him head above all things to the church.

In respect to which both the evangelical dispensation here, and the future state of bliss hereafter, are called the kingdom of heaven. Over this he reigns, enjoying all royal prerogatives, exercising all royal administrations, and dispensing most royal munificences. He hath in this his kingdom established most righteous and wholesome laws; the which his subjects are by him obliged and enabled to obey. He constantly defendeth and protecteth

his subjects from all invasions and assaults of their SERM. XX.
 enemies, (intestine enemies, their own lusts; exter-
 nal enemies, the Devil and the world.) He provides
 for all their needs and wants; he supports them in
 all their distresses and troubles. He exercises judg-
 ment over them; distributing fit rewards and punish-
 ments with exquisite justice and equity; (most liberal
 rewards to the loyal and obedient; most severe pu-
 nishments upon obstinate offenders and rebels.) He Col. ii. 15.
 lastly restrains and suppresses, defeats and destroys,
 all the adversaries to his royal dignity, and to the
 welfare of his good subjects, both visible and invisible,
 temporal and spiritual. *Out of his mouth* (as it is in Rev. xix.
 the Apocalypse) *there goeth a sharp sword, that* Psal. ii. 9.
with it he should smite the nations; and he shall Matt. xxv.
rule them with a rod of iron. These mine enemies, 31.
 (he shall one day say,) *which would not that I should* Luke xix.
reign over them, bring them hither, and slay them 27.
before me. He must reign, saith St. Paul, *till he* 1 Cor. xv.
hath put all enemies under his feet. Thus is he a 25.
 King, endued with sovereign right and power,
 crowned with glorious majesty, enjoying all preemi-
 nences, and exercising all acts suitable to regal dig-
 nity.

3. He is likewise a *Priest*, and that much above Heb. viii. 6.
 an ordinary one; *διαφορωτέρας τέτυχε λειτουργίας,* *He* Ἀρχιεὺς
τῆς ἑμολογί-
ας ἡμῶν.
hath obtained a more excellent function (as the
 apostle to the Hebrews speaketh) than ever any
 other priest had. *Every high priest,* saith the apo- Heb. iii. 1.
 stle to the Hebrews, *is appointed to offer gifts and* viii. 3.
sacrifices. He did, as such, once offer up an obla-
 tion, in worth and excellency far surpassing all the
 sacrifices and oblations that ever were made; (all 1 Pet. i. 18.
 the fattest hecatombs that ever were sacrificed, all Heb. ix. 9.

SERM. the gold and precious stones that ever were dedi-
 XX. cated, all the spices and perfumes that ever were
 kindled into incense, upon altar, were but vile and
 sordid, were ineffectual and unacceptable, in compa-
 rison thereto;) a willing oblation he made upon the
 altar of his cross of himself, (his most innocent, most
 pure, most spotless and unblemished self,) of his
 most glorious body, (the temple of the Divinity,) of
 his most precious blood, of his dear life, *for the life
 of the world* and redemption of mankind; for the
*propitiation of our sins and the sins of the whole
 world*; an oblation which alone could appease God's
 wrath, and satisfy his justice, and merit his favour
 toward us.

He doth also (which is another sacerdotal per-
 formance) *intercede for us*; he intercedes as an ad-
 vocate for the pardon of our sins; (*If any man sin,
 we have an advocate with (or to) the Father, Jesus
 Christ the righteous.* He intercedes for the accept-
 ance of our services, (whence we are enjoined to *do
 all things, to pray, to give thanks in his name;*)
 for the *granting our requests; for grace and as-
 sistance*; for *comfort and reward*; for all *spiritual
 blessings* and advantages to be conferred upon us;
 he thus pursuing the work of salvation by his pro-
 pitiatory sacrifice begun for us; whence, as the apo-
 stle to the Hebrews saith, *he is able to save to the
 uttermost those that by him come to God, seeing he
 ever liveth to make intercession for us.*

He doth also perform the priestly function of
blessing. Blessing the people in God's name, and
 blessing God in the people's behalf; as did that il-
 lustrious type of his, Melchizedek; (*Blessed, said
 he, be Abraham of the most high God, possessor*

of heaven and earth ; and blessed be the most high SERM. XX.
God, which hath delivered thine enemies into thy
hand.) So hath Jesus effectually pronounced all
 joy and happiness to his faithful people ; he pro-
 nounced blessedness to them in his sermons ; he Matt. v. 1. &c.
 blessed his disciples at his parting ; *Lifting up his* Luke xxiv. 50.
hands, he blessed them, saith St. Luke ; *God in him,* Eph. i. 3.
 saith St. Paul, *hath blessed us with all spiritual*
blessings in heavenly places, (or in heavenly things ;)
 and, *God,* saith St. Peter, *having raised up his son* Acts iii. 26.
Jesus, sent him to bless us in turning every one of
us from his iniquity : and at the last day he will
 utter that comfortable benediction ; *Come, ye blessed* Matt. xxv. 34.
of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for
you from the foundation of the world. So is Jesus
 a true and perfect *Priest.* And,

So, finally, in all respects, is *Jesus God's anoint-
 ed, and the Christ of God ;* as the great *Prophet*
 and *Doctor ;* as the *Sovereign King and Prince ;*
 as the *High Priest and Advocate* of his church.
 And indeed that he is so is the fundamental point
 of our religion ; which the apostles did peculiarly
 testify, preach, and persuade ; the sincere belief of
 which doth constitute and denominate us *Chris-
 tians.*

IV. The consideration whereof ought to beget in
 us a practice answerable to the relations between
 him and us ; grounded thereupon.

If Jesus be such a *Prophet,* we must, with care-
 ful attention, and a docile mind, hearken to his ad-
 monitions and instructions ; we must yield a steady
 belief to all his doctrine, and we must adhere con-
 stantly thereto, and we must readily obey and prac-
 tise what he teaches.

Heb. ii. 1, &c.
 Δια τοῦτο δι-
 ἡμᾶς προσ-
 ἵχουν τοῖς
 ἀκουσθῆσι,
 μήποτε πα-
 ραρρηῶμεν,
 &c.

SERM. XX. If he be a *King*, we must maintain our due allegiance to him, pay him honour and reverence, submit to his laws and commandments, repose trust and confidence in him, fly to his protection and assistance in all our difficulties and needs.

If he be a *Priest*, we must with sincere faith and hope apply ourselves unto him for, and rely upon, his spiritual ministries in our behalf; sue for and expect propitiation of our sins by virtue of his sacrifice; the collation of all spiritual gifts from his intercession; all comfort, joy, and felicity in consequence of his effectual benediction. *Having*, (so the apostle to the Hebrews admonisheth us,) *a great Priest over the house of God, let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith.*

In short, if *Jesus* be *Christ*, let us be *Christians*; Christians, not only in name, in outward profession, in speculation and opinion, but in very deed and reality, in our heart and affection, in all our conversation and practice. *Let every one that nameth the name of Christ* (that is, who confesseth Jesus to be Christ, and himself to be his follower) *depart from iniquity.*

Now the God of peace, that brought from the dead our Lord Jesus Christ, that great Shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant, make us perfect in every good work to do his will, working in us that which is well-pleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ; to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen.

His only Son, &c.

S E R M O N XXI.

JOHN i. 14.

And we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father.

THAT *Jesus Christ our Lord* is the *μονογενής*, **SERM.**
the only Son of God, that is, the Son of God in a **XXI.**
peculiar and high manner, otherwise far than any John i. 18.
creature can be so termed, St. John doth here (and iii. 16, 18.
1 John iv. 9.
in several other places) suppose, or assert plainly;
and it is a great point of the Christian doctrine, a
special object of our faith. To shew the truth of
which, to explain how it is to be understood, and to
apply the consideration thereof to our practice, shall
be the subject and scope of our present discourse.

I. That the Messias, designed by God to come
into the world for the restoring and reconciling
mankind unto God, was in an especial manner to
be the Son of God, even the ancient prophets did
foretell and presignify; *Thou art my Son, this day* Ps. ii. 7.
have I begotten thee, saith God of him in the se- Heb. i. 5.
Acts xiii.
cond Psalm. And of him, that which in the first ^{33.}
less perfect sense was spoken to king Solomon,
(who as the son and heir of David, as the builder
of God's house, as a prince of peace, reigning in
great glory, wealth, and prosperity; as endued with

SERM. incomparable wisdom, did most signally represent
 XXI. and prefigure him,) was chiefly intended for him,
 and did more exactly agree to him; *He shall be
 my son, and I will be his Father; and I will
 establish the throne of his kingdom over Israel
 for ever: and again; He shall cry unto me, Thou
 art my father, my God, and the rock of my sal-
 vation: Also I will make him my firstborn, higher
 than the kings of the earth.* And accordingly it
 was, even before our Saviour's appearance, a per-
 suasion commonly passing among the Jews, (both
 learned and unlearned,) that the Messiah should
 be the Son of God; as may be collected from se-
 veral passages in the New Testament; in which
 being *the Christ* and being *the Son of God* are
 conjoined as inseparable adjuncts, whereof one did
 imply the other, according to the sense then cur-
 rent, and previous to the embracing our Lord's doc-
 trine. For Nathanael, we see, was no sooner per-
 suaded that Jesus was the Christ, but he (according
 to his anticipation, common to the people) confess-
 eth thus; *Rabbi, thou art the Son of God; Rabbi,
 thou art the King of Israel.* Martha in like man-
 ner being moved to declare her faith concerning
 Jesus, expresseth it thus; *Yea, Lord, I believe
 that thou art the Christ, the Son of God, which
 should come into the world:* and likewise doth St.
 Peter, in the name of all his brethren, the apostles;
*We have believed, and have known, that thou art
 the Christ, the Son of the living God.* St. John the
 Baptist also doth thus express his belief and yield
 his testimony concerning Jesus; *And I said, and
 bare record, that this is the Son of God.* Yea even
 the high priest himself implied the same, when ex-

1 Chron.

xxii. 10.

xxviii. 6.

2 Sam. vii.

13.

Ps. lxxxix.

26, 27.

Heb. i. 5.

John i. 49.

John xi. 27.

John vi. 69.

Matt. xvi.

16.

John i. 34.

amining our Lord he said, *Art thou the Christ, the Son of the Blessed? I adjure thee by the living God, tell us, whether thou be the Christ, the Son of God*: supposing that to be *the Christ* and to be *the Son of God* would concur in the same person. SERM. XXI. Mark xvi. 16. Matt. xxvi. 63.

Yea, the devils themselves had learned this, who cried out, *What have we to do with thee, Jesus, thou Son of God?* Matt. viii. 29. Mark i. 24. Luke iv. 41. 34.

Thus did the ancient scriptures intimate, and thus were God's people generally persuaded about the Messias; and that he is indeed the Son of God, the evangelical scripture doth every where teach us, calling him not only at large *the Son of God*, but more emphatically the ἀγαπητός, (*the darling Son of God*;) the υἱὸς τῆς ἀγάπης, *Son of God's love*; the υἱὸς ἀληθινός, *God's true Son*, (that is, such most properly, in a most excellent manner incomparably representing and resembling God;) the ἴδιος υἱός, (*God's proper, or peculiar Son*;) the πρωτοτόκος, *God's first-born*; God's υἱὸς μονογενῆς, *his only begotten Son*: all which epithets import somewhat of peculiar eminency in the kind and ground of this his relation unto God. The relation itself in a large sense, and equivocally, is attributed to several: Adam is called *the son of God*; and the angels are usually entitled such; and princes are styled *the children of the Most High*; and all men are said to be *God's offspring*, and good men are especially dignified with that appellation; *God's people*, as such, (the Israelites of old, and Christians now,) are *the children of God*; yea, God is the *Father of all things*, as the maker and preserver of them: but all these, in comparison to Christ, are such in a manner very inferior, and in a very improper sense; for he is the *only* κατὰ τὴν ἑσχίστην ὑψωσίαν. Naz. Orat. 37.

SERM. XXI. *Son of God*: which denotes a relation in its kind singular and incomparable; from which all other things are excluded.

Now that we may discern the difference, let us consider the grounds and respects upon which this relation of our Saviour to God is built, or the reasons why he is called the Son of God: there are several expressed or implied in scripture.

1. Christ is called *the Son of God* in regard to his *temporal generation*, as being in a manner extraordinary conceived in the *Blessed Virgin by the Holy Ghost*; so the angel expressly telleth us: *The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee; therefore also that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called*

Luke i. 35.
Τὸ γινώμι-
ναι ἅγιον.

Gal. iv. 4.

Luke i. 32.
He shall be
great, and
shall be
called the
Son of the
Highest:
and God
shall give
him the
throne of
his father
David.

Dies iste
quem tan-
quam ex-
tremum
reformidas,
æterni na-
talis est.
Sen. Epist.
102.

Luke xx.
35, 36.

1 Cor. xv.
20, 23.

ed the Son of God: so the apostle also; *When the fulness of time was come, God sent forth his Son made of a woman*, (or born of a woman, γενόμενον ἐκ γυναικὸς—γεννώμενον in some copies:) a generation so peculiar and wonderful, without intervention of any father but God himself, is one ground of this relation and title; he therein excelling the common sort of men.

2. Christ also may be termed *the Son of God* in regard to his *resurrection* by divine efficacy; that being a kind of *generation*, or introduction into another state of life immortal. Others are upon this ground called the sons of God; *They*, saith our Saviour, *who shall be accounted worthy to obtain that world, and the resurrection from the dead—can die no more; for they are equal to the angels, and are the children of God*, (υἱοὶ εἰσὶ τοῦ Θεοῦ,) *being sons of the resurrection*. How much more then may he be thence so named, who is *the firstfruits of them*

that sleep, and the firstborn from the dead ? especially since that of the Psalmist, Thou art my son, this day have I begotten thee, was (according to St. Paul's exposition) verified in the raising him. In this respect Christ also did much excel all others, who upon the same ground are called the sons of God.

SERM.
XXI.

Col. i. 18.
Rev. i. 5.
Acts xxvi.
23. iii. 15.
xiii. 32, 33.

3. Christ is capable of this title by reason of that *high office*, in which by God's especial designation he was instated. If ordinary princes and judges (as being deputed by God to represent himself in the dispensation of justice, or as resembling God in the exercise of their power and authority) have been called *the children of the Most High*, in the language of holy scripture; with how much greater truth and reason may he be called so, who was most signally consecrated and commissioned to the most eminent function that ever was or could be; who did whatever he did in God's name, who represented and resembled God so exactly? It is his own argumentation and inference; *If he called them gods, unto whom the word of God came, and the scripture cannot be broken; say ye of him, whom the Father hath sanctified, and sent into the world, Thou blasphemest, because I said, I am the Son of God?* That extraordinary *sanctification* and *mission* did render him worthy and capable of that appellation, far beyond all others, who have for the like reason obtained it.

Ps. lxxxii.
6. xxix. 1.

John v. 35,
36.

4. Whereas also it is said, that God did appoint, or constitute our Saviour heir of all things; did give him head above all things to the church, and did put all things under his feet; did give him power over all flesh; did commit unto him all au-

Heb. i.
Eph. i. 22.
John xvij.
2.
Matt.
xxviii. 18.
xi. 27.

SERM. *thority in heaven and earth ; did exalt him to the*
 XXI. *highest place of dignity and authority next to him-*
 Phil. ii. 9. *self, at the right hand of the Majesty in the high-*
 Heb. i. 3, *est; yea did place him upon his own throne and*
 &c. *tribunal in his room, so that the Father judgeth no*
 Acts ii. 33. *man, but hath committed all judgment to the Son;*
 36. *well may he in that respect be entitled the Son of*
 John v. 22. *God; as thereby holding the rank and privilege*
suitable to such a relation; he being the Chief of
the family, and next in order to the great Paterfa-
 Eph. iii. 15. *milies of heaven and earth. Of him, saith St. Paul,*
 Heb. iii. 5, *all the family in heaven and earth is named: Mo-*
 6. *ses verily, saith the Apostle to the Hebrews, was*
faithful in all his house as a servant, but Christ as
 Heb. i. 4, *a Son over his own house: and, Being made so*
 5, 7. *much better than the angels, saith the same apostle,*
as he hath by inheritance obtained a more excellent
name than they, (they being only called servants, or
ministers; he being entitled a Son and heir.)

In these respects is our Saviour properly, or may be fitly, denominated *the Son of God*, with some peculiarity and excellency beyond others: but his being with such emphasis called *God's only begotten Son*, (denoting an exclusion of all others from this relation upon the same kind of ground,) doth surely import a more excellent ground thereof, than any of these mentioned. For the *first Adam* did also immediately receive his being from the power and inspiration of God, (God formed his body and

breathed a soul into it.) And Isaac, Samuel, and John the Baptist had also a generation extraordinary and miraculous, as being born of parents mortified by age and unapt for generation, by interposition of the divine power, (so it is expressly said of Sarah,

'Αφ' ἑνὸς καὶ
 ταύτα νῦν
 γεννᾶται.

Heb. xi. 11,
 12.

μιν ἔλαβεν εἰς καταβολὴν σπέρματος, *she received* SERM.
er from God for conception of seed;) which XXI.
 ductions do not so greatly differ from the produc-
 of Christ as man.

And how can we conceive that the production of
 els should be so much inferior to our Saviour's
 poral generation, if there were no other but
 t?

And although our Saviour was the first and chief,
 was he not the only Son of the resurrection;
ere were, as the Apostle to the Hebrews saith, Heb. ii. 10.
ny sons of this kind brought to glory; and Christ Rom. viii.
firstborn among many brethren; this is also ^{29.}
 round not proper or perspicuous enough for such
 enomination; and indeed before it came to pass,
 was called God's Son; he was so when he lived,
 was so when *God so loved the world, that he*
ve him for its salvation.

Neither doth the free collation of power and dig- John iii. 16,
 r, how eminent soever, well suffice to ground this ^{18.}
 gularity of relation; for we see others also in re-
 d to their designment and deputation to offices
 power and dignity, although indeed subordinate
 inferior to those he received, to be entitled *the*
s of God; and however this is rather the found-
 on of a metaphorical, than of a natural and pro-
 sonship, which is too slender and insufficient
 him, who in the most solemn and august strain
 enominated such.

likewise although our Saviour be the heir of all
 igs, yet hath he co-heirs, whom *God hath*, as St. Rom. viii.
 il speaketh, *together enlivened, and together* ^{17, 29.}
sed, and together seated with him in thrones of ^{6.}
 y and bliss; beside that privileges of this kind
 Heb. ii. 10.

SERM. are rather *consecutive* and *declarative* of this his
XXI. relation to God, than formally *constitutive* thereof:

Rom. viii.
17.

If a son, then an heir, saith St. Paul; inheritance follows *sonship*, and declares it, rather than properly makes it.

Moreover those prerogatives of singular affection and favour appropriated to Christ, together with all those glorious preferments consequent on them, do also argue some higher ground of this relation: for how could it be, that merely upon account of that temporal generation, (which did only make him a
Heb. iv. 15. man, *of like passions and infirmities to us, sin only excepted*;) or in respect to any thing consequent thereupon, God should affect him with so special a dearness, and advance him to dignities so superlative, ὑπεράνω πάσης ἀρχῆς, καὶ ἐξουσίας, καὶ δυνάμεως, καὶ
Eph. i. 21. κυριότητος, *far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is*
1 Pet. iii. *named; angels and authorities and powers being,*
22. *as St. Peter says, made subject unto him?* Such proceedings (that generation only, or any thing resulting from it, being supposed) do not seem consistent with that decent congruity and natural equity, which God is ever wont to observe in his regard to persons and in his ordering of things.

We must therefore search for a more excellent and more proper ground of this magnificent relation, or peculiar *sonship*; and such an one we shall find clearly deducible from testimonies of holy scripture, (and by several steps of discourse we shall deduce it.)

1. It is thence first evident, that our Saviour had in him somewhat more than human, according to which he is said to have existed before his temporal generation here among men. Even as men after

death are in regard to a superviving part of them, SERM. XXI.
 their immortal soul, said to be and live; for, even Luk. xx.38.
 then, saith our Lord, *all men do live to God.* For, before his birth here, he is said to have been in heaven, and to have descended thence; *No man*, John iii. 13.
saith he, hath ascended up to heaven, but he that came down from heaven, even the Son of man, which is in heaven: even when he visibly lived here, he was (as himself affirms) *secundum aliquid sui*, according to somewhat invisible in him, then actually in heaven; and according to that *somewhat* he was before in heaven; and by union of that invisible being to human visible nature, he is said to have descended from heaven. His ascension into heaven was but a translation of the human nature thither, where according to a more excellent nature he did abide before the incarnation; for, *What*, saith John vi. 62.
 he again, *if ye shall see the Son of man ascend up where he was before?* from hence he is declared worthy and capable of so transcendent preferments; for, *He that cometh from above, out of heaven, is* John iii. 31.
above all things; because, *The second man is the* viii. 23. 1 Cor. xv.
Lord from heaven. He, as to his manifestation in 47.
 the flesh, was junior to St. John the Baptist, but in truth was of more ancient standing, and thence was to be preferred before him, as St. John himself perceived and professed; *He that*, said St. John, *comes after me is preferred before me, because he was before me.* He did subsist even before Abraham was born, whence without absurdity he could affirm, that he and Abraham had interviews and intercourse together; so he discoursed with the Jews; *Thou* John viii.
art not, said they, *yet fifty years old, and hast thou* 58.
seen Abraham? he replied; *Verily, verily, I say*

SERM. *unto you, Before Abraham was, I am* : this saying
 XXI. did seem very absurd to them, and so offended them,
 that they took up stones to cast at him ; not apprehending the mystery couched in his words, and that he had another nature, different from that which appeared to them, according to which that saying of his was verified. Yea further he had a subsistence and a glory before the world had a being ; for thus he prays ; *And now, Father, glorify me with thine own self with the glory which I had with thee before the world was* ; glory (that is, a most honourable state of being, and excellent perfection) was not only destined to him, but he really had it, and enjoyed it with God, before the world was.

John xvii.
5.

ἡ ἰχθὺν παρὰ
σου.

2. Necessary indeed it was, that he should exist before the world, for that, secondly, God by him made the world, and for that he made the world himself : *God*, saith St. Paul, *created all things by Jesus Christ* ; and, *By him*, saith the Apostle to the Hebrews, *God made the worlds* ; (or the ages, τοὺς αἰῶνας, that is, all things which ever at any time did subsist ; those very ages, which the same apostle saith *we believe to have been framed by the word of God*.) *By him*, saith St. John in the beginning of his Gospel, *were all things made, and without him was nothing made that was made* ; δι' αὐτοῦ, that is, *by him*, not δι' αὐτὸν, *for him* only : to exclude that ungrammatical misinterpretation, St. Paul joineth both those notions together ; τὰ πάντα δι' αὐτοῦ, καὶ εἰς αὐτὸν ἑκτίσται, *All things*, saith he, *were made by him, and for him* : as also to prevent any restriction or exception of matters created by him, he particularly reckoneth what things were made by him ; *By him*, saith St. Paul, *were all things created, that are*.

Eph. iii. 9.

Heb. xi. 2.

John i. 3.

Col. i. 16.

in heaven and that are in earth; whether they be SERM. XXI.
 thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers,
 all things were created by him, and for him: he
 was not only (as some heterodox interpreters would
 expound it) to create a new moral and figurative
 world; he should not only restore and reform man-
 kind, but he of old did truly and properly give being
 to all things; and among those things, he even cre-
 ated angels, *all things in heaven*; beings unto
 which that metaphorical creation of men here doth
 not extend or anywise appertain: he therefore con-
 sequently, as St. Paul subjoins, ἐστὶ πρὸ πάντων, *doth*
exist before all things; as the cause must necessa-
 rily in nature precede the effect.

3. He did indeed (to ascend yet higher, even to
 the top) exist from all eternity: for he is called ab-
 solutely ἀρχή, *the beginning*, which excludes all time Col. i. 18.
 previous to his existence; he is styled πρωτότοκος πάσης Rev. iii. 14.
 κτίσεως, *the firstborn of every creature*; (or rather Col. i. 15.
 born before all the creation, as πρῶτός μου ἦν signifies,
he was before me, in St. John.) He is *the Word*, John i. 30.
 which was *in the beginning*; that is, before any i. 1.
 time conceivable, and consequently from eternity.
 He is called *the eternal life*; *The life* (saith St. 1 John i. 2.
 John in his first Epistle; *the life*, that is, another John i. 4.
 name, frequently attributed to Christ, especially by xi. 25. xiv.
 that apostle; *the life*) *was manifested, and we did* 6.
see it; and we bear witness, and shew that eternal 1 John i. 2.
life, which was with the Father, (ὁ λόγος ἦν πρὸς τὸν v. 11, 12,
 Θεόν, *the Word was with God*; and ἡ ζωὴ ἦν 20.
 πρὸς τὸν πατέρα, *the life was with the Father*, are,
 as I conceive, the same thing :) and more explicitly
 in the same Epistle; *We are*, saith St. John, *in* 1 John v.
him that is true, in his Son Jesus Christ; he 20.

SERM. *is the true God, and the eternal life.* Hence is
 XXI. he frequently in the Apocalypse styled *the first*
 Rev. i. 11, *and the last, the beginning and the end, Alpha*
 17. ii. 8, *and Omega; he that was, and is, and is to come;*
 21. vi. 22, 13. which phrases do commonly express the eternity
 and immortality proper to God; as in that of Isaiah;
 Isa. xli. 6, *Thus saith the Lord, the King of Israel, and his*
 xli. 4. Redeemer the Lord of hosts; *I am the first, and*
 xlviii. 12. *I am the last, and beside me there is no God.* The
 same is signified by that elogy of the Apostle to the
 Heb. xiii. 8. Hebrews; *Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, to*
day, and for ever, (that is, who is eternally immu-
 table;) that apostle also implies the same, when he
 saith, that Melchizedek represented and resembled
 the Son of God, as having μήτε ἀρχὴν ἡμερῶν, μήτε ζωῆς
 Heb. vii. 3. τέλος, *neither beginning of days nor end of life;*
 Melchizedek in a typical or mystical way, our Lord
 in a real and proper sense was such; beginningless
 and endless in his existence. And the prophet
 Micah seems to have taught the same, saying of
 him, (of him that should come out of Bethlehem, to
 be ruler in Israel,) that *his goings forth have been*
 Mic. v. 2. *from old, even from everlasting;* (or, from the days
 of eternity.) His eternity is however necessarily
 deducible from that, which is by St. John, St. Paul,
 and the Apostle to the Hebrews so plainly affirmed
 of him, that he made the world, that he made the
 ages, that he made *all things*; for if he made the
 world, he was before the foundations of the world,
 which phrase denotes eternity; if he made the ages,
 he must be before all ages; if all things were made
 by him, and nothing can make itself, then necessarily
 he was unmade; and being unmade, he necessarily
 must be eternal; for what at any time did not exist,

can never without being made come to exist. His **SERM. XXI.**
eternity also may be strongly inferred from his being
called the word, the wisdom, and the power of God; 1 Cor. i. 24.
for if he were not eternal, ἦν ἄρα καιρὸς, ὅτε χωρὶς τούτων In decret. Conc. Nic. pag. 276.
ἦ ὁ Θεός, there was a time when God wanted these ;
when he was without mental speech, or understand-
ing; when he was not wise, when he was not power-
ful; as St. Athanasius argues. It therefore doth
with sufficient evidence appear from scripture, that
our Saviour had a being before his temporal birth,
and that before all creatures, yea even from eternity.
Furthermore,

4. From what hath been said, it follows, that his
being was absolutely divine. If he was no creature,
if author of all creatures, if eternally subsistent, then
assuredly he is God; that state, that action, that
property are incommunicably peculiar unto God.
Only God is ὁ ὢν, *being of himself* originally and in-
dependently; only God is *the creator of all things,*
(He that made all things is God, saith the Apostle Heb. iii. 4.
to the Hebrews;) *only God hath immortality,* (or 1 Tim. vi. 16.
eternity,) saith St. Paul; no epithet or attribute is
more proper to God, than that, αἰώνιος Θεός, *God* Rom. xvi. 26.
eternal. Hence is our Lord said by St. Paul, be-
fore he did assume the form of a servant, and be-
came like unto men, to have *subsisted in the form* Phil. ii. 6,
of God, not deeming it robbery to be equal to God,* 7. τὸ ἵσταναι ἑαυτὸν ὅμοιον τῷ Θεῷ.
(or to have a subsistence in duration and perfection
equal to God;) so that as he was after his incarna-
tion truly man, partaker of human nature, affections,
and properties; so before it he was truly God, par-
taking the divine essence and attributes. Thence
is he often in the scriptures absolutely and directly
named God; God in the most proper and most high

SERM. sense; *In the beginning was the Word, and the*
 XXI. *Word was with God, and the Word was God,*

John i. 1. saith St. John in the beginning of his Gospel, (the place where he is most likely to speak with the least ambiguity or darkness;) the same Word, which was in time *made flesh, and dwelt among us*, did before

1 Tim. iii. all time exist with God, and was God. *God*, saith
 16. St. Paul, *was manifested in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen of angels, preached among the Gentiles, believed upon in the world, assumed up into glory*: of which propositions it is evident that

Christ is the subject, and by consequence he is there named God. God is also by St. Paul said to have
 Acts xx. 28. *purchased the church with his own blood*; who did that, but he that also was man, even *the man Christ Jesus*? St. Thomas upon his conviction of our Saviour's resurrection did express his faith upon him

John xx. 28. by crying out, *My Lord and my God*; which ac-
 Συγχαρη-
 λίσιν, καὶ
 μᾶλλον ἀπο-
 δέχεται, μὴ
 παύων αὐ-
 τόν. Athan.
 Orat. 3.
 contra Ar.
 p. 394.
 Tit. ii. 13.
 Heb. ii. 8.
 1 John v.
 20.
 knowledgment our Saviour accepted and approved as a proper testimony of that faith; (*He permits him to say it, or rather he accepts it, not hinder- ing him*, saith St. Athanasius.) St. Paul calls the coming of our Lord at the resurrection, *the appear-*

ance of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ. To the Son (as the Apostle to the Hebrews interpreteth it) it was said in the Psalm, (Psal. xlv. 7.) *Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever; the sceptre of thy kingdom is a right sceptre*. *We are*, saith St. John, *in the true one, in his son Jesus Christ*; *this he (ὁὔτος) is the true God, and life eternal*; no false, no metaphorical, no temporary God, but the very true God, the supreme eternal

Rom. xi. 5. God. *Out of whom*, (saith St. Paul, recounting the privileges of the Jewish nation,) *as concerning the*

flesh, (or according to his humanity,) *Christ came*, SERM. XXI.
who is over all, God blessed for ever; *ὁ ἐπὶ πάντων*
θεός, the God over all; the sovereign God and Lord Mark xiv. 61.
of all things^a; the Most High; *God blessed for* Rom. i. 25.
ever; *the ὁ εὐλογητός*, which is a characteristical title 2 Cor. xi. 31.
or special attribute of God in the style of the scrip- Isa. ix. 6.
tures, and according to the common use of the Jews.
Yea even of old, Isaiah foretold *of the child which*
should be born, of the son which should be given
to us, that his name should be called (that is, ac-
cording to the Hebrew manner of speaking, that he
should really be, or however that he truly should be
called) *the Mighty God, the everlasting Father,*
the Prince of Peace.

In these places more clearly and immediately, in Vid. 1 John iii. 16.
many other places obliquely and according to fair Gal. i. 1, 12.
consequence, in many more probably, our Saviour is Jude 4.
called God, God absolutely without any interpreta- Isa. xxxv. 4.
tive restriction or diminution. And seeing the holy
scripture is so careful of yielding occasion to con-
ceive more Gods than one; seeing it is so strict in
exacting the belief, worship, and obedience of one
only God, absolutely such; may we not well infer
with St. Irenæus, *Now* (saith he, speaking indeed
concerning the God of the Old Testament, whom
the Gnostics did not acknowledge to be the highest
and best God, but in words applicable to the God
of the New Testament, whom we adore; *Now*, saith
he) *neither the Lord, nor the Holy Ghost, nor the*
apostles would ever have called any one definitively,

^a Utrosque Dei appellatione significavit Spiritus et eum qui ungitur Filium, et eum qui ungit, id est Patrem. *Iren. iii. 6.*

Rev. v. 13. πᾶν κτίσμα, (where by the way seeing all creatures worship him, he is excluded from being a creature.)

SERM. *nor absolutely God, unless he were truly God: and,*
 XXI. *Never, saith he again, did the prophets or the apo-*
stles name any other God, or call Lord, beside the
true and only God^b.

That he is truly God, we might also from other appellations peculiar to God; from divinest attributes and divinest operations ascribed to him; from the worship and honour we are allowed and enjoined to yield him, further shew; but these things (in compliance with the time and your patience) I shall omit.

Other appellations also peculiar unto the supreme God are assigned to him, as that most appropriate and incommunicable name *Jehovah*; (of which in
 Isa. xlv. 6, the prophet Isaiah God himself says thus; *I am the*
 18.
 Deut. vi. 4. *Lord, and there is none else:* and Moses; *Jehovah*
our God is one Jehovah: even this is attributed to
 Jer. xxiii. 6. him; for, *This*, saith Jeremiah, *is his name, whereby*
 xxxiii. 16. *he shall be called, Jehovah our righteousness:* and
 of St. John the Baptist it was by Malachi foretold,
 Mal. iii. 1. that he should *prepare the way of Jehovah*. The
 Matt. iii. 3. name *Lord* (answering to *Jehovah*) is both absolutely and with most excellent adjuncts commonly
 1 Cor. xv. given him; *The second man*, saith St. Paul, *is the*
 47.
 Acts x. 36. *Lord from heaven*; the *Lord of all things* he is
 Rom. x. 12. called by the same apostle; and, *the one, or only*
 1 Cor. viii. *Lord: To us*, saith he, *there is one Lord, by whom*
 6. *are all things:* and, *the Lord of glory*, or most glo-

^b Neque igitur Dominus, neque Spiritus Sanctus, neque Apostoli eum, qui non esset Deus, definitive et absolute Deum nominassent, nisi esset verus Deus. *Iren.* iii. 6.

Nunquam prophetæ, neque apostoli alium Deum nominaverunt, vel Dominum appellaverunt, præter verum, et solum Deum. *Idem*, lib. iii. cap. 8.

rious Lord; (*If they had known, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory:*) and, *The Lord of lords, and King of kings*, he is called in St. John's Revelation, (*They shall, saith he, war with the Lamb, and the Lamb shall overcome them, for he is the Lord of lords, and King of kings:*) we are also by precept enjoined, and by exemplary practice authorized, to render unto our Saviour that honour and worship, which are proper and due to the only supreme God; for, *Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve*, is the great law of true religion: * *It is only belonging to God, as St. Athanasius speaks, to be worshipped; a creature must not worship a creature, but a servant his Lord, and a creature its God.* And, † *They who call a creature Lord, and worship him as a creature, how, saith he, do they differ from the heathen?* But of him it is said, *Let all the angels of God worship him; of him myriads of angels say, Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive the power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing: yea all creatures in heaven and earth, and under the earth, resound the same acclamation, saying; To him that sitteth upon the throne, and to the Lamb, be the blessing, and the honour, and the glory, and the worship, and the praise for ever. Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his blood—to him be glory and dominion for ever and ever.* Hence the throne of God the Father and of his Son are one and the same; *The throne of God, and of the Lamb, are in it*, saith St. John, speaking of the heavenly city; *For the Son, saith that great father, reigning with the same royalty of his Father, is*

SERM.
XXI.1 Cor. ii. 8.
Ps. xxiv. 9.
Jude 4.
Rev. xvii.
14. xix. 16.

Matt. iv. 10.

* Θεῷ ἵστι
μόνον τὸ
προσκυνῆ-
σαι. κτίσ-
ματι κτίσμα
οὐ προσκυνῶ,
ἀλλὰ δοῦλος
δισπότην,
καὶ κτίσμα
Θεῶν. Athan.in Ar. Or.
iii. p. 394.† Οὗτοι δὲ
κτίσμα λαί-
γοντες εἶναι
τὸν κύριον,
καὶ ὡς κτίσ-
ματι λατρεύ-
οντες αὐτῷ,
τί διαφέρου-
σιν ἰλλήνων;Ath. Or. i.
in Ar. p. 296.Heb. i. 6.
Rev. v. 12,
13. iv. 11.Vid. Rev. i.
5.

Rev. xii.

3.
Τὴν τι γὰρ
τοῦ πατρὸς
βασιλείαν
βασιλεύον
ὁ υἱὸς ἐπὶ τὸν

- SERM. *seated upon the same throne with his Father.* To
 XXI. invoke the name of our Lord Jesus Christ is a
 practice characterizing and distinguishing Christians
 from infidels; as when St. Paul inscribes his Epistle
 to the church of Corinth, *together with all that call*
upon the name of our Lord Jesus Christ in every
place; and when Saul is said to *have authority from*
the chief priests to bind all that called upon his
name, so that we need not to allege the single exam-
 ple of St. Stephen invoking our Lord. Indeed himself
 informs us, that *the Father had committed all judg-*
ment unto the Son, that all men should honour the
Son, even as they honour the Father. To wish and
 pray for *grace and peace from our Lord Jesus*
Christ is the usual practice of the apostles, and to
 dispense them is a prerogative of his, common to
 him with God his Father. To have the same Holy
 Spirit as the Father unmeasurably, and to send it
 from himself, with commissions and instructions, and
 to communicate it freely, are especial characters of
 supreme divinity, and much transcending any crea-
 ture, as St. Athanasius observes; *With authority,*
saith he, to give the Spirit doth not suit a creature,
or a thing made, but is an endowment of God.
 Whereas also we are often severely prohibited from
 relying or confiding upon any man, or any creature,
 (as in that of the prophet; *Cursed be the man, that*
trusteth in man, and maketh flesh his arm;) we
 are yet allowed, yea we are obliged, to repose our
 trust and confidence in Christ; *Ye trust in God,*
saith he himself to his disciples, trust also in me;
 whence St. Paul calleth him emphatically *our hope,*
 in his compellation to Timothy; *Paul an apostle of*
Jesus Christ, by the commandment of God our Sa-
- ἀπὸ τοῦ θρόνου
 τοῦ πατρὸς
 καθῆσθαι.
 Athan. Or.
 ii. in Ar.
 1 Cor. i. 2.
 Acts ix. 14.
 21.
 Rom. x. 12.
 13, 14.
 2 Tim. ii.
 22.
 John v. 23.
 24.
 2 John iii.
 Rom. i. 7.
 1 Cor. xiii.
 2 Thess. ii.
 16.
 1 Thess. iii.
 12.
 Tit. iii. 6.
 τὸ δὲ μετ' ἡ-
 ουσίας δίδοναι
 τὸ πνεῦμα,
 οὐ κτίσμα-
 τος, οὐδὲ
 ποιήματος
 ἵσταν, ἀλλὰ
 Θεοῦ δῶρον.
 Ath. Orat.
 iii. in Ar.
 p. 388.
 Jer. xvii. 5.
 John xiv. 1.
 Col. i. 27.
 1 Tim. i. 1.

viour, and the Lord Jesus Christ, our hope; which SERM. *is the same title that Jeremiah attributes unto God; XXI.*
O the hope of Israel, the saviour thereof in time of Jer. xiv. 8. *trouble.* Hence to him, jointly with God the Father, and the divine Spirit, that solemn benediction or prayer is directed; *The grace of our Lord Jesus* 2 Cor. xiii. *Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of*^{13.} *the Holy Ghost, be with you all;* as also a parity of highest adoration is then together with the same divine persons yielded to him, when we are baptized in his name, and consecrated to his service.

The divinest attributes of God are also in the most absolute manner and perfect degree assigned to him: eternity, as we discoursed before. Immen- John iii. 13. *sity of presence and power, then implied, when speaking with the Jews he told them that he was then in heaven; and when he promises his disciples, that he will be with them, whenever they meet in his* Matt. xviii. *name; and also, that he will be with them, to the*^{20. xxviii.} *end of the world.* Infinite wisdom and knowledge; *for in him are hidden all the treasures of wisdom* Col. ii. 3. *and knowledge; and, Now are we sure, say the* John xvi. *disciples to him in St. John, that thou knowest all*^{30. xxi. 17.} *things: and, Lord, saith St. Peter, thou knowest all things, thou knowest that I love thee: and St. Paul calls him the wisdom of God, and the power* 1 Cor. i. 24. *of God: wherefore since God's wisdom is omniscient, and his power omnipotent, so consequently is he. In short, whatever attribute or perfection God hath, the same hath he; for, All things, saith he,* John xvi. *that the Father hath, are mine.* What creature^{15.} without high presumption could say those words concerning the divine Spirit; *He shall glorify me,* John xvi. ^{14.}

SERM. *for he shall receive of mine, and shall shew it unto*
 XXI. *you.*

The divine attributes he expresseth by divinest operations and works, which are ascribed to him. It is a most divine work to create; this we shewed before to have been performed by him: to sustain, and conserve things in being, is another like work; Heb. i. 3. *this he doth; For he, saith the Apostle to the Hebrews, upholdeth all things by the word of his*
 Col. i. 17. *power; and, By him, saith St. Paul, all things consist.* To perform miracles, or do things surmounting the laws and thwarting the course of nature; such as by mere word and will rebuking winds and seas, curing diseases, ejecting devils, is the property of him, who, as the Psalmist says, *alone doeth great*
 Ps. lxxii. 18. *wonders.* Particularly to raise the dead is a prerogative reserved by God in his own hand; (for, *The*
 lxxxvi. 8,
 10. cxxxvi. *Lord killeth, and the Lord maketh alive; he*
 4. *bringeth down to the grave, and bringeth up.*)
 1 Sam. ii. 6. *This our Lord often did at his pleasure; for, As*
 Deut. xxxii. 39. *the Father raiseth up the dead, and quickeneth them; even so the Son quickeneth whom he will:*
 Rev. i. 18. *and of himself he saith in the Apocalypse; I have*
 the keys of hell and of death. Especially to raise
 John x. 17, 18. *himself, which he assumeth to himself; (I, saith he,*
 lay down my life, that I may take it up again; I have power to lay it down, and I have power to
 John ii. 19. *take it up again: and, Demolish this temple, saith*
 he again, *and in three days I will rear it; which*
 it was impossible for him to do, and unintelligible how it should be done, otherwise than by the divinity resident in him. To be καρδιογνώστης, searching men's hearts and discerning their secret thoughts,

is a peculiar work of him that saith, *I the Lord try the heart, I search the reins* ; and of our Lord it is **SERM. XXI.** said, *He needed not that any should witness about a man, for he knew what was in man* ; and by Jer. vii. 10. John ii. 25. many experiments he declared this power. To foresee and foretell future contingencies to be peculiar to himself God signified, when in the prophet he thus challenged the objects of heathen worship ; *Shew the things to come, that we may know ye are gods* ; this our Lord did upon several occasions, particularly in the case of Judas's treason ; *He knew*, saith St. John, *from the beginning, who they were who did not believe, and who it was that should betray him*. This, I say, he did, not as the prophets, by particular arbitrary revelation, but immediately by his own Spirit ; whereby even the prophets themselves were illustrated and inspired ; for it was, as St. Peter says, *The Spirit of Christ in them which testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ, and the glories that should follow*. To see and know God, (*who inhabits inaccessible light*) is 1 Tim. vi. 16. beyond a creature's capacity and state, and yet belongs to him ; *None*, saith he, *hath seen the Father*, John vi. 46. *save he which is of God ; he hath seen the Father* : and, *None knoweth the Father, but the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal him*. Matt. xi. 27. To remit sins absolutely he denied not to be the property of God, when his adversaries thus objected it ; *Who can forgive sins, except God only ?* yet he assumed Mark ii. 7. Is. xliii. 25. it to himself, and asserted it by a miracle. To save also God declared to be a peculiar work of his, when he said it, and reiterated it in Isaiah and in Hosea : *I am the Lord, and beside me there is no Saviour* ; Isa. xliii. 11. xlv. 21. which act yet, and which title, are no less proper to Hos. xiii. 4.

SERM. our Lord. In fine, briefly, he claims to himself at
 XXI. once the performance of every divine work, when
 John v. 19. he saith, *Whatsoever the Father doeth, that also doeth the Son likewise.*

Now all this state and majesty, all these glorious titles, attributes, and works, can we imagine that he
 Deut. vi. 15. *whose name is jealous*, as it is in Exodus xxxiv. 14. and *who is jealous of his name*, as it is in Ezekiel xxxix. 25. who said it once and again in the prophet Isaiah, that *he will not give his glory to another*; can we conceive, I say, that he should communicate them, or should suffer them to be ascribed to any mere creature, how eminent soever in nature or worth, how dear soever upon any regard? for indeed the highest creature producible must be infinitely distant from him, infinitely inferior to him, infinitely base and mean in comparison to him, as to any true perfection or dignity; nor therefore can any creature be in nature capable of such names, such characters, such prerogatives; nor can in any reason or justice accept or bear them. Our Saviour therefore, unto whom by divine allowance and injunction they are attributed, who willingly admits them, who clearly assumes them to himself, is truly God.

οὐδ' ἐν ἰσχύι
 μῆτι δούλος
 ὢν, καὶ τῶν
 πολλῶν, ὡς
 ἐν τῇ κέλῃ
 τρέφεται τοῦ
 δισπότου.
 Chrys. in
 Joh. i. 18.

5. Now the whole tenor of our religion (according to dictates of scripture most frequent and obvious) asserting the unity of God; our Saviour therefore, being God, must of necessity partake the same individual essence with God his Father; and it must be certainly true, which he affirmeth concerning himself; *I and the Father are one*, (ἐν ἑσμεν, are the same thing, or one in nature; not εἷς ἑσμεν, the same in person, or manner of subsistence;) and what he again saith; *He that hath seen me hath seen the*

John x. 30.
 1 John v. 7.

Joh. xiv. 9.
 Rev. xxi.
 22. The

Father ; and, *I am in the Father, and the Father in me* ; by the divine essence common to both. SERM. XXI.

Yet hath he not this essence from himself, but by communication ; for, *As the Father hath life in himself, so he hath given the Son to have life in himself.* And ὁ ὢν παρὰ τοῦ Θεοῦ, he *that is*, or hath his essence, *from God*, is the periphrasis he gives of himself. He is not first in order, as an original, but is *the image of the invisible God*, (an image indeed most adequate and perfectly like, as having the very same nature and essence.) He is ἀπαύγασμα τῆς δόξης, (*the effulgency of his Father's glory*), and χαρακτήρ τῆς ὑποστάσεως, *the character*, or exact impression, *of his substance*. He is the internal word, or mind of God, which resembles him, and yet is not different from him : he is the *life*, the *wisdom*, the *power* of God ; which terms denote the most intrinsic and perfect unity. So the apostles, by the most apposite comparisons that nature affords, strive to adumbrate the ineffable manner of that eternal communication of the divine nature from God the Father to our Saviour ; the which is that generation, whereupon the relation, about which we speak, is founded ; or, because of which our Lord is most truly and properly called, *the only begotten Son of God*. For, if to produce a like in any kind or degree, be to generate ; then to give a being without any dissimilitude or disparity is the most proper generation : our Saviour therefore hence truly is the Son of God the Father. And that he is so only, that no other beside him hath been ever thus begotten, is evident ; for that as no reason of ours could have informed us, that our Saviour himself was thus begotten, so no revelation hath shewed us that any other

Lord God Almighty is its temple and the Lamb.

John v. 26. vi. 46.

Col. i. 15. 2 Cor. iv. 4. John xiv. 9. Heb. i. 3.

SERM. hath been ; and we therefore cannot without extreme
 XXI. temerity suppose it. We are sufficiently instructed
 that all other divine productions, together with the
 relations grounded on them, are different from this ;
 by creation things receive a being from God infinitely
 distant from, infinitely unequal and unlike to, the
 divine essence ; and that *filiation*, or sonship, which
 doth stand upon adoption and grace, is wholly in
 kind different from this. And the communication
 of the divine essence jointly from the Father and
 Son to the Holy Spirit, doth in manner (although the
 manner thereof be wholly incomprehensible to us) so
 differ from this, that in the holy scripture (the only
 guide of our conception, and of our speech in mat-
 ters of this nature, far surpassing our reason) it is
 never called generation ; and therefore we must not
 presume to think or call it so.

Ὁ καὶ ἡμῶς
 συμμορφού-
 μιν κατὰ
 χάριν, τὴν δι'
 αὐτοῦ, πρὸς
 τὴν τῆς υἱο-
 θείας ἀνα-
 βαίνομεν δόξ-
 αν. Cyril.
 Al.

But let so much suffice for explication of the
 point ; a point represented in scripture so consider-
 able, that the belief thereof (if it have that sincerity
 and that strength as to dispose our hearts to a due
 love and reverence of the Son of God, attended with,
 or attested to by, a faithful obedience to his laws)
 doth raise us also to the privilege of becoming the
 sons of God, and doth mystically unite us to him,
 and elevateth us above the world ; so doth St. John
 John i. 12. teach us ; *To as many*, saith he, *as received him*,
 (received him as the Son of God, or believed him to
 be so,) *to them gave he the power* (or the privilege)
 1 John iv. *to become the sons of God* : and, *Whosoever*, saith
 15. *he, shall confess that Jesus is the Son of God, God*
 1 John v. 5. *dwelleth in him, and he in God* : and, *Who*, saith
 he again, *is he that overcometh the world, but he*
that believeth that Jesus is the Son of God ? of so

great importance is the point. Of which I shall SERM.
only now further briefly propose some practical ap- XXI.
plications.

1. We may hence learn whence the performances and the sufferings of Christ become of so high worth and so great efficacy. *Wonder not*, saith St. Cyril Μὴ θαυμά-
ζης εἰ κόσμος
ὅλος ἱλυτρώ-
θη, οὐ γὰρ
ἦν ἄνθρωπος
ψιλός, ἀλλ'
υἱὸς Θεοῦ
μονογενῆς, ὁ
ὑπερασπότης
ἡμῶν, &c.
Cyrill.
Catech. 13. the Catechist, *if the whole world was redeemed; for it was not a bare man, but the only Son of God that died for it.* It is not so strange, that God's only Son's mediation should be so acceptable and so effectual with God; that the blood of God's dearest Son should be so precious in God's sight, that the intercession of one so near him should be so prevalent with him. What could God refuse to the Son of his love earnestly soliciting and suing in our behalf! what debts might not so rich a price discharge! what anger could not so noble a sacrifice appease! what justice could not so full a dispensation satisfy! *We* 1 Pet. i. 18,
19.
Ps. xlix. 7. *were not*, St. Peter telleth us, *redeemed with corruptible things, with silver or gold*, (no; whole Indies of such stuff would not have been sufficient to ransom one soul;) *but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot.* It was not, as the Apostle to the Hebrews remarketh, by the *blood of goats and heifers*, that Heb. ix. 12,
13, 14. x.
4, 8, 10. our sins were expiated, (no; whole hecatombs would have nothing availed to that purpose;) but *by the blood of Christ, who by the eternal Spirit offered up himself spotless unto God*, (who as the eternal Son of God did offer himself a sacrifice not to be blamed or refused.) *It is*, as St. John saith, *the blood of Christ, the Son of God, which purgeth us from all sin.* And well indeed might a Person so infinitely noble, worthy, and excellent, be a sufficient ransom

SERM. for whole worlds of miserable offenders and captives.

XXI.

Ἡ Ἰωαννης
παρουσία τοῦ
σωτῆρος θα-
νάτου λύτρον,
καὶ πείσιν
πάσης σωτη-
ρία γίγνεται.
Athan. ad
Adelph.
Rom. viii. 3.

Well might his voluntary undergoing such inconveniences and infirmities of life, his suffering so disgraceful and painful a death, countervail the deserved punishment of all mankind; well might his so humble, so free, so perfect submission to God's will infinitely please God, and render him propitious to

us. *Well might, as St. Athanasius speaks, the very appearing of such a Saviour in the flesh be a general ransom of sin, and become salvation to every*

creature: the which St. Paul thus expresseth; God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh,

and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh: for if our displeasing, injuring, and dishonouring him, who is so great and so good, doth aggravate our offence; the equal excellency and dignity of the Person, submitting in our behalf to the performance of all due obedience and all proper satisfaction, may proportionably advance the reparation offered, and compensate the wrong done to God. Well therefore may we believe, and say with comfort, after the apostle;

Rom. viii.
33.

Τίς ἐγκαλέσει κατὰ τῶν ἐκλεκτῶν; Who shall criminate against the elect of God? it is God that justifieth, (it is the Son of God, it is God himself, who satisfies divine justice for us;) who is there that condemns? it is Christ that died.

2. We may hence be informed, what reverence and adoration is due from us to our Saviour, and

John v. 23.
Heb. i. 6.
Phil. ii. 10.

why we must honour the Son, even as we honour the Father; why even all the angels must worship him; why every thing in heaven, and earth, and beneath the earth must bend the knee (that is, must yield veneration and observance) to him; why by all creatures whatever the same preeminence is to be

ascribed, and the same adoration paid jointly and SERM. XXI.
 equally to *God the Father Almighty, who sits upon the throne, and to the Lamb*, his blessed Son, who Rev. v. 13.
standeth at his right hand. Such divine glory and worship we are obliged to yield him, because he is the Son of God, one in essence, and therefore equal in majesty, with his Father : were it not so, it would be injury to God, and sacrilege to do it ; God would not *impart his glory*, we should not attribute it unto another. So this consideration grounds our duty and justifies our practice of worshipping our Lord ; it also encourages us to perform it with faith and hope ; for thence we may be assured, that he, being the Son of God omniscient, doth hear and mind us : being the Son of God omnipotent, he can thoroughly help and save us ; being also, as such, absolutely and immensely good, he will be always disposed to afford what is good and convenient for us in our need.

3. We hence may perceive the infinite goodness of God toward us, and our correspondent obligation to love and thankfulness toward him. *In this*, saith Tit. iii. 4. Eph. ii. 4.
 St. John, *was manifested the love of God toward us, because God sent his only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through him.* John iv. 9, 10. *In this*, adds he, *is love*, (love indeed, love admirable and inconceivable,) *not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his only begotten Son to be a propitiation for our sins.* Can there be imagined any equal, any like expression of kindness, of mercy, of condescension, as for a prince, himself glorious and happy, most freely to deliver up, out from his own bosom, his own only most dearly beloved Son, to the suffering most base contumelies and most grievous

SERM. XXI. pains for the welfare of his enemies, of rebels and traitors to him? even such hath been God's goodness to us: the Son of God, the heir of eternal majesty, was by his Father sent down from heaven,

Col. i. 21.
1 John iv.
9.

(from the bosom of his glory and bliss,) to put on the form of a servant, to endure the inconveniences of this mortal state, to undergo the greatest indignities and sorrows; that we, *who were alienated, and enemies in our mind by wicked works, might be reconciled to God*; might be freed from wrath and misery; might be capable of everlasting life and salvation: suitable to such unexpressible goodness ought our gratitude to be toward God: what affectionate sense in our hearts, what thankful acknowledgments with our mouths, what dutiful observance in all our actions, doth so wonderful an instance of mercy and goodness deserve and require from us?

John iii. 6.

4. This consideration may fitly serve to beget in us hope and confidence in God upon any occasions of need or distress; to support and comfort us in all our afflictions; for, *He that so loved us, that he gave his only begotten Son for our salvation and happiness*, how can we ever suspect him as unwilling to bestow on us whatever else shall to his wisdom appear needful or convenient for us? He that out of pure charity and pity toward us did part with a jewel so inestimable, how can any thing seem much for him to give us? it is the consolatory discourse of St. Paul; *He*, saith the apostle, *that did not spare his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him freely give us all things?* all things that we truly need, all things that we can reasonably desire, all things which are good and fit for us.

Rom. viii.
32.

5. St. John applieth this consideration to the be- SERM.
XXI.
getting charity in us toward our brethren. *Beloved,*
saith he, *if God so loved us,* (as to send his only be- 1 John iv.
12.
gotten Son into the world, that we might live by
him,) *we ought also to love one another.* If God
so lovingly gave up his only Son for our sakes, what,
(in grateful regard to him, in observant imitation of
him,) what expressions, I say, of charity and good-
will ought we to yield toward our brethren? what
endeavours, what goods, what life of ours should
seem too dear unto us for to expend or impart for
their good? shall we be unwilling to take any pains
or suffer any loss for them, for whom (together with
ourselves) the Son of God hath undergone so much
trouble, so much disgrace, so much hardship? shall
we, I say, be uncharitable, when the Son of God
hath laid upon us such an obligation, hath set before
us such an example?

6. This consideration also may inform us, and
should mind us, concerning the dignity of our nature
and of our condition; and consequently how in re-
spect to them we should behave ourselves. If God
did so much consider and value man, as for his be-
nefit to debase his only Son; if the Son of God him-
self hath deigned to assume our nature, and to ad-
vance it into a conjunction with the divine nature,
then is man surely no inconsiderable or contemptible
thing; then should we despise no man, whom God
hath so regarded and so honoured; then ought we
not to neglect or slight ourselves: if we were worthy
of God's so great care, we ought not to seem un-
worthy of our own. We ought to value ourselves,
not so indeed as to be proud of so undeserved honour;
but so as to be sensible thereof, and to suit our

SERM. demeanour thereto. Reflecting upon these things
 XXI.

should make us to disdain to do any thing unworthy that high regard of God, and that honourable alliance unto him. It should breed in us noble thoughts, worthy desires, and all excellent dispositions of soul conformable to such relations ; it should engage us unto a constant practice, beseeming them whom God hath so dignified, whom the Son of God hath vouchsafed to make his brethren : by

Heb. ii. 14.

ing any thing mean or sordid, by doing any thing base or wicked, we greatly undervalue ourselves, we much disparage that glorious family, into which, by the Son of God's incarnation, we are inserted. Ταύτης οὖν τῆς τιμῆς ἀξίαν τὴν φιλοσοφίαν ἐπιδειξώμεθα, καὶ μηδὲν ἔχωμεν κοινὸν πρὸς τὴν γῆν. *Let us therefore, saith St. Chrysostom, shew a philosophy worthy of this honour ; having nothing common with this earth.* (In Joh. i. Hom. 18.)

Acts iii. 26.
 Rom. vi. 22.

7. This consideration doth much aggravate all impiety and sin. Wilful sin upon this account appeareth not only disobedience to our Creator and natural Lord, but enormous offence against the infinite bounty and mercy and condescension of our Saviour ; a most heinous abusing the Son of God, who came down into this homely and humble state on purpose to bless us, in turning every one of us from our iniquities ; to free us from the grievous dominion and from the woful effects of sin ; we thereby frustrate the most gracious intentions of God, and defeat the most admirable project that could be for our benefit and salvation : we thereby trample upon the Son of God, recrucify him, and put him to an open shame : so the Apostle to the Hebrews telleth us, implying the heinous guilt and sad consequence

Heb. vi. 6.

of doing so; *He*, saith the apostle, *that despised* SERM. XXI.
Moses's law died without mercy;—Of how much
sorer punishment, suppose ye, shall he be thought Heb. x. 28.
worthy, who hath trodden under foot the Son of
God, and hath counted the blood of the covenant,
wherewith he was sanctified, an unholy thing?

8. Lastly, This consideration may serve to beget in us a high esteem of the dispensation evangelical, and hearty submission thereto. Almighty God, (as is signified in the parable,) after several provisions Luke xx. 13. for the good of mankind, and several messages from heaven to the world here, did at last send his Son, with this expectation; *Surely they will reverence my Son*: and surely much reason he had to expect the greatest reverence to be yielded to his person; the readiest credence and obedience to his word. For if any declaration of God concerning his will, of our duty, however proceeding from him, (either by dictate of natural reason, or by the instruction of prophets, or by the ministry of angels,) ought to be entertained with great respect and observance; much more should the overtures of greatest mercy and favour exhibited by his own Son (on purpose sent unto us to discover them) be embraced with highest regard, and humblest reverence, and most hearty compliance. It is the Apostle to the Hebrews his discourse and inference; *Therefore* Heb. i. 2. ii. 1, 3. (saith he, therefore, because *God hath in these last times spoken unto us by his Son*) *we ought* περισσοτέρως προσέχειν, *to give more* (abundant, or more) *earnest heed to the things which we have heard; for, sub-* joins he, *how shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation; which at first began to be spoken by (our) Lord, and was confirmed unto us by them*

SERM. *that heard him ? Ταῦτ' οὖν διηγεκῶς στρέφοντες, καὶ ὁ*

XXI.

λογιζόμενοι ἐκκαθάρωμεν ἡμῶν τὸν βίον, καὶ λαμπρὸν ποιή

μεν· Continually therefore revolving and recon

ing these things, let us cleanse our life, and ma

Vide Chrys. *it bright: so we conclude with good St. Chrys*

tom. vi. p.

623, &c.

tom.

*Almighty God, who hast given us thy only
gotten Son to take our nature upon him ; gr
that we being regenerate, and made thy child
by adoption and grace, may daily be renewed
thy Holy Spirit, through the same our Lord Je
Christ, who liveth and reigneth with thee and
same Spirit, ever one God, world without e
Amen.*

Our Lord.

SERMON XXII.

EPHESIANS iv. 5.

One Lord.

AS the name of *God* (truly common to all three **SERM.**
Persons of the Blessed Trinity) is (not in way of ex- **XXII.**
clusion, but) according to a mysterious peculiarity Luke ii. 11.
(κατ' οἰκονομίαν, in way of dispensation, accommodated "Ὁς ἰσχυρὸς Χρ-
στὸς, Κύριος.
to our instruction, as the Greek fathers express it)
attributed to God the Father, who is the Fountain
of the Deity, and first in order among the divine
Persons; so likewise is the name *Lord*, truly com-
mon to the other Persons, peculiarly (though also
not exclusively) ascribed and appropriated unto God
the Son; who therefore in the style of the New Tes-
tament, which more fully hath revealed him, is call-
ed sometimes absolutely *Lord*, sometimes *the Lord*
Jesus, sometimes *our Lord*; to acknowledge and
call him so, being the especial duty, and the distinc-
tive mark or character of a Christian: for, *to us*, as
there is one God and Father of all, and *one Holy*
Spirit, so there is, as St. Paul here in my text doth
say, *one Lord*. And elsewhere; *There be* (saith 1 Cor. viii.
he, 5, 6. there be, according to popular estimation and
worldly use) *gods many, and lords many; but to*

SERM. *us there is one God the Father, and one Lord*
 XXII. *Jesus Christ.* Hence to call upon the name of the
 Lord Jesus Christ (that is, by confession and prac-
 tice to acknowledge him *our Lord*) gives a peri-
 phrasis, or description of a Christian, (*To the church*
 1 Cor. i. 2. *of God that is in Corinth, sanctified in Christ*
 Acts ix. 14. *Jesus, called to be saints, together with all that*
call upon the name of the Lord Jesus Christ in
every place; that is, together with all Christians
 every where; so doth St. Paul inscribe his First
 1 Cor. xii. Epistle to the Corinthians;) whence, *No man*, saith
 3. he in the same Epistle, *can call Jesus Lord, but by*
the Holy Ghost; that is, no man can heartily em-
 brace Christianity without the gracious assistance of
 God's holy Spirit. The reason of which appellation
 being so peculiarly attributed unto Christ, may be,
 for that, beside the natural right unto dominion over
 us, necessarily appertaining to him as our God, who
 hath made us, and doth preserve us, there are divers
 other respects and grounds supervenient, and accru-
 ing to him from what he hath undertaken, perform-
 ed, and undergone for us, in spontaneous obedience
 to the will of God his Father, upon which also the
 title of *Lord* is due unto him: the which to declare
 first, then to apply them unto our practice, shall be
 the subject and scope of our present Discourse.

In whatsoever notion we take the word *Lord*,
 either as a prince over subjects, or as a master over
 servants, or as an owner of goods, or as a preceptor
 and president over disciples, or as a leader and cap-
 tain to followers, or as a person singularly eminent
 above inferiors, he is according to all such notions
 truly *our Lord*.

According to whatever capacity we distinctly or

abstractively consider him, either as the *Son of God*, SERM. XXII. or as the *Son of man*, or as Θεάνθρωπος, (jointly *God and man*; united in one person,) as *Jesus* our Saviour, as *the Christ of God*, he is *our Lord*.

If we examine all imaginable foundations of just dominion, eminence in nature and power, the collocation of being or preservation thereof, donation, conquest, purchase, merit, voluntary compact; upon all these he hath a right of lordship over us duly grounded.

I. He is, I say, first, *our Lord* according to every notion and acception of the word *Lord*.

He is our Prince and Governor, we are his subjects and vassals; for to him it was said, *Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever; the sceptre of thy kingdom is a right sceptre.* Of him it was prophesied, that *the government should be upon his shoulder*, Is. ix. 6, 7. and that *of the increase of his government and peace there should be no end*; he is *the King of Israel*, or of the church, who, as the angel told the blessed Virgin, *shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever and ever. God hath given him head over all things to the church.* So is he a Prince most absolute, endued with sovereign right and power, Luke i. 33. Eph. i. 22. 1 Cor. xv. 27. crowned with glorious majesty, enjoying all pre-eminences, and exercising all acts suitable to regal dignity, in respect to all things, and particularly in regard to us.

He also is our Master, and we are his servants; 1 Tim. iii. 15. the church is a house and family, whereof he is the οἰκοδεσπότης, or householder; *If, saith he, they have called the Master of the house Beelzebub, how much more those of his household?* Matt. xxiv. 45. x. 25. (τοὺς οἰκιακοὺς αὐτοῦ, *famulos ejus*, his domestics, or menial servants.)

SERM. *All the family in heaven and earth are named of*
 XXII. *him*, saith St. Paul; that is, the whole church (both

Eph. iii. 15. *triumphant above in heaven, and militant here on*
earth) is his family, or called the family of him, as of
 Heb. iii. 6. *its Lord. Christ*, saith the Apostle to the Hebrews,
is as a son over his house, whose house are we:

1 Cor. vii. *He that is called free is a servant of Christ: and,*

22. Col. iii. 24. *We serve the Lord Christ: and, We have a Mas-*

Eph. vi. 9. *ter in heaven*, saith St. Paul: *Blessed*, saith our

Col. iv. 1. *Lord himself, is that servant, whom his Lord com-*
 Matt. xxiv. 46. *ing shall find so doing; that is, whom Christ, our*

Lord, coming to judgment, shall find discharging
his duty faithfully. He indeed as a good Master
governeth, ordereth, and maintaineth his family
well; furnisheth and feedeth it with all necessary
provisions; protecteth it from all want and all mis-

1 Cor. iii. 8. *chief; appointeth to every one therein, his due work*

Luke vi. 35. *and service, and payeth to each his due wages and*
 Rev. xxii. 12. *recompense.*

He is also our Owner, or the Possessor and Pro-
 2 Pet. ii. 1. *prietary of us; The Lord that bought us*, as St.
 Peter calls him; and consequently, who possesseth
 and enjoyeth us. *We are not our own*, saith St.
 1 Cor. vi. 19, 20. vii. 23. *Paul; for we were bought with a price: whence*
we are become entirely subject to his disposal.

He likewise is our Preceptor, or Teacher; that
 is, the Lord of our understanding, which is subject
 to the belief of his dictates; and the Lord of our
 practice, which is to be directed by his precepts.

John xiii. 13. *Ye*, saith he, *call me Master, and Lord*, (διδάσκαλον,
 καὶ κύριον, *Doctor and Lord*,) *and ye say well, for*

Matt. xxiii. 10. *so I am: and, Be ye not called masters*, (καθηγηταί,
 guides in doctrine,) *for one is your Master, even*

2 Cor. x. 5. *Christ: and, Every thought of ours*, saith St. Paul,

is to be *captivated* to the *obedience of Christ*. SERM. XXII.
Such, as infallibly wise, and perfectly veracious, he necessarily is unto us; such he is, as sent on purpose by God to enlighten our minds with the knowledge of heavenly truth, and *to guide our feet into the ways of peace*; whence we cannot but be obliged to embrace his doctrine, and to observe the rules which he prescribeth us. John i. Luke i. 79.

He is therefore also our Captain and Leader; whose orders we must observe, whose conduct we should follow, whose pattern we are to regard and imitate in all things: he is styled ἀρχηγὸς πίστεως, *the Captain of our faith*; ἀρχηγὸς ζωῆς, *the Captain of our life*; ἀρχηγὸς σωτηρίας, *the Captain of our salvation*; ἀρχιποίμην, *our chief Shepherd*, the *Apostle*, and *High Priest of our profession*; *the Bishop of our souls*. In fine, he, according to what St. Paul says, ἐν πᾶσι πρωτεύει, *hath in all things the primacy and preeminence*; so that according to all notions and senses of *lordship* he is our Lord; but chiefly he is meant such in the principal sense, as having an absolute right and power to command and govern us. 1 Pet. ii. 21. Heb. xii. 2. ii. 10. Acts iii. 15. v. 31. 1 Pet. ii. 25. v. 4. Heb. iii. 1. Col. i. 18.

II. *Christ* is also *our Lord* according to every capacity or respect of *nature* or *office*, that we can consider appertaining to him.

1. He is *our Lord* as by *nature* the *Son of God*, partaking of the divine essence and perfections: he as such being endued with eminence superlative and with power irresistible; as such having created all things, and upholding all things; whence all things necessarily and justly are subject to his order and disposal; all things according to all right and reason are to be governed, possessed, and used according to

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his pleasure. Hence is that most august and most peculiar name, **JEHOVAH**, (denoting either independency and indefectibility of subsistence, or uncontrollable and infallible efficacy in operation, or both of them together; which therefore is by the Greek interpreters fitly rendered *Κύριος*, and after them *Lord* by our translators; for the word *κύρειν* doth signify to subsist, and *κύρος* is used to denote efficacy, ratification, steadfast power or authority) assigned to him; *This is his name whereby he shall be called, JEHOVAH OUR RIGHTEOUS-*
NESS, saith Jeremiah of him: and, *I will have mercy upon the house of Judah, and will save them by Jehovah their God*, saith God in Hosea concerning the salvation accomplished by him: and in the prophet Zechariah he thus speaks of himself; *Sing and rejoice, O daughter of Zion; for, lo, I come, and I will dwell in the midst of thee, and thou shalt know that the Lord of hosts hath sent me unto thee*: where it is said that Jehovah, being sent by Jehovah, should come and dwell in the church, enlarged by accession of the Gentiles: who can that be, but *our Lord Christ*, who dwelt among us, and was by God his Father sent unto us? And what in the Old Testament is spoken of Jehovah is by infallible expositors in the New attributed to our Lord; *Sanctify Jehovah Sabaoth, and he shall be for a stone of stumbling, and for a rock of offence*; so did Isaiah speak; and his words are by St. Peter and by St. Paul applied to *Christ*. *Whosoever shall call upon the name of Jehovah shall be delivered*; so did the prophet Joel foretell concerning the latter days; and St. Paul accommodates it to the salvation obtained by confessing the name of Christ. In Ma-

Jer. xxiii. 6.

Hos. i. 7.

Zech. x. 12.
Jehovah à
Jehova.
Gen. xix.
24.
apud Iren.
iii. 6.

Isa. viii. 13,
14.

1 Pet. ii. 7.
Rom. ix. 33.

Joel ii. 32.
Rom. x. 9,
10, 13.

lachi, Jehovah saith, that *he would send his messenger to prepare his way before him*; this, according to the Evangelists' interpretation, was verified in St. John the Baptist's *preparing the way before* our Saviour. Likewise, what Isaiah said, *The voice of him that cried in the wilderness, Prepare the way of Jehovah*, is by all the Evangelists applied to the Baptist, as *the voice crying*, and to our Saviour, as the *Lord coming*: Christ therefore is the *Lord Jehovah*, independent and immutable in essence and in power.

The word *Adon* also, which more immediately and properly doth signify *dominion*, (and which put absolutely doth belong to God,) is plainly attributed to our Saviour. *The Lord (Jehovah) said to my Lord (le Adonai;)* that is, God the Father to Christ the Son, yet Lord of David, as our Saviour himself expounds it. And, *The Lord (ha Adon) shall come to his temple*; so in Malachi it is prophesied concerning the coming of Christ. According to this notion was it, that St. Thomas, being by our Saviour's resurrection convinced of his divinity, cried out, *My God, and my Lord*: in this sense it was, that St. Peter called our Saviour *Lord*, when he ascribed omniscience to him, saying, *Lord, thou knowest all things, thou knowest that I love thee*. Upon this account, St. John the Baptist said, *He that cometh from above is above all things*, which St. Paul expresseth thus; *The second man is the Lord from heaven*. So is Christ, as he is God, *our Lord*.

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Mal. iii. 1.
Matt. iii. 3.
Mark i. 2, 3.
Johh i. 23.
Luke vii.
27. iii. 4.
Isa. xl. 3.

Ps. cx. 1.
Matt. xxii.
43.

Mal. iii. 1.

John xx. 28.

John xxi.

17.

John iii. 31.

1 Cor. xv.
47.

2. He is also our Lord as *man*, by the voluntary appointment and free donation of God his Father; in regard to the excellency of his Person, and to the merit of his performances. God did by gift and de-

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legation confer upon him a supereminent degree of dignity and authority, with power to execute the most lordly acts of enacting, of dispensing with, and of abrogating laws; of judging, of remitting offences; of dispensing rewards, and of punishing transgressors. The scripture is copious and emphatical in declaring this point both in general terms and with respect to particulars. *Let all the house of Israel, saith St. Peter, know assuredly, that God hath made him Lord and Christ, even this Jesus, whom ye did crucify: and, Thou hast given him power over all flesh: All things are delivered unto me by my Father: All power is given me in heaven, and upon earth: The Father hath loved the Son, and hath given all things into his hand; saith he concerning himself: and, Being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross: wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow—and that every tongue should confess that Jesus is the Lord: and, God raised him from the dead, and set him at his right hand in the heavenly places, far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come; and hath put all things under his feet, and gave him to be head over all things to the church: and, We see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honour: and, The Lamb which was slain is worthy to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour,*

Acts ii. 36.

John xvii.

2. Luke x. 22.

Mat. xi. 27.

xxviii. 18.

John iii. 35.

xiii. 3.

Phil. ii.

8—11.

Eph. i. 20.

1 Pet. iii. 22.

Heb. ii. 9.

Rev. v. 12.

and blessing: and, When the Son of man sits upon SERM. XXII.
the throne of his glory, ye shall sit upon twelve
thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel. In Matt. xix. 28. xxv. 31. xxvi. 64.
 which places, as in others of the same importance, it is signified generally, that beside the dominion, naturally belonging to our Saviour as God, there hath been conferred on him, as man, an universal dominion over all things in regard to what, as man, he did and suffered; and that in him, as the Apostle to the Hebrews observeth and discourseth, that hath been signally fulfilled which the Psalmist acknowledgeth, and praiseth God for, in respect to man; *Thou crownedst him with glory and honour, and didst set him over the works of thy hand, and didst put all things in subjection under his feet.* In him also was accomplished the prophetic vision of Daniel; *I saw in the night visions, and, behold, one like the Son of man—And there was given him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all people, nations, and languages, should serve him: his dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed.* It is also particularly expressed of him, that to him, as man, is committed a power legislative; *I say unto you, I command you,* is the style he commonly used: and, *The Son of man,* John xv. 10, 12, 14. said he, *is Lord of the sabbath;* (that is, hath a power to dispense with the observation thereof, or to abrogate the positive law concerning it; which by parity of reason infers a general power of constituting and rescinding laws of the like nature.) The prerogative also of remitting sins was given him; *That ye may, saith he, know that the Son of man* Matt. ix. 6. *hath power on earth to forgive sins, (then saith he* Luke v. 24.

SERM. XXII. *to the sick of the palsy,) Arise, take up thy bed, and walk :* and, *The God of our fathers, saith St. Peter, hath raised Jesus, whom ye slew, and hanged on a tree ; him hath God exalted with his right hand to be a Prince and a Saviour, to give repentance unto Israel, and remission of sins.* The administration of justice and judgment he thus also hath ; for he is, ὁρισμένος ὑπὸ τοῦ Θεοῦ κριτῆς, *ordained by God the Judge of quick and dead ;* God hath appointed to judge the world, ἐν ἀνδρὶ ᾧ ὥρισε, *by the man whom he hath ordained : The Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment to the Son—and hath given him authority to execute judgment also, ὅτι υἱὸς ἀνθρώπου ἐστὶ because, or whereas, he is the Son of man :* so also for the prerogative of distributing rewards and inflicting punishments ; *The Son of man, saith he, shall come in the glory of his Father with his angels, and reward every man according to his work.* Thus by emphatical expression it is signified, that Christ, *as man, is our Lord, by God's appointment and donation.* We may also consider, that our Saviour, *as the Son of David,* and consequently by a right of succession, according to divine ordination, *as King of Israel,* (to the which all Christians are become proselytes ; for, προσεληλύθατε Σιών ὄρει, *Ye are proselytes to mount Sion, and to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem,* saith the Apostle to the Hebrews,) is our Lord ; according to that of the angel to the blessed Virgin ; *He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest ; and the Lord God shall give him the throne of David his Father ; and he shall reign over the house of Israel for ever and ever : Of the increase of his go-*

Acts v. 30,
31.

Acts x. 42.
xvii. 31.

John v. 22,
27.

Matt. xvi.
27.

Heb. xii.
22.

Luke i. 32.

Isa. ix. 7.
Acts ii. 30.

vernment there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice from henceforth even for ever: so Isaiah foretold of him; and many like passages occur in other prophets. SERM.
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3. He also considered as Θεάνθρωπος (*as God and man*, united in one Person) is plainly our Lord. For whatever naturally did appertain to God, whatever freely was (in way of gift or reward) communicated to man, doth accrue to the Person, and is attributed thereto, in consequence of the union hypostatical, or personal. It was indeed by virtue thereof, that *the man Christ Jesus* became capable of so high preferments; wherefore most properly upon this consideration is Christ *the Lord of all*, as St. Peter styles him; *having all things (him only excepted, who did subject all things to him) put under his feet.* Acts x. 36.
1 Cor. xv.
27.

4. If we also consider him as *Jesus*, our Saviour, that notion doth involve acts of dominion, and thence resulteth a title thereto: nothing more becomes a *Lord*, than to protect and save; none better deserves the right and the name of a *Lord*, than a Saviour; wherefore those titles are well conjoined; *I am the Lord, and beside me there is no Saviour*, saith God in Isaiah of himself; and, *Him hath God exalted to be a Prince and a Saviour to his right hand*, saith St. Peter concerning Jesus. Isa. xliii. 11.
Acts v. 31.

5. Likewise if he be considered as *the Christ*, that especially implieth him anointed, and consecrated to sovereign dominion, as king of the church: well therefore did the angel express his joyful message when he told the shepherds; *I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people; for unto you is born this day in the city of David*

SERM. *a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord*: and St. Peter
 XXII. well joined them, saying, *Let all the house of Is-*
 Acts ii. 36. *rael know assuredly, that God hath made that*
same Jesus, whom ye have crucified, both Lord
and Christ. Thus in all respects is Christ our
Lord.

III. Let us also further briefly survey the several grounds upon which dominion may be built, and we shall see that upon all accounts he is our *Lord*.

1. ^aAn uncontrollable power and ability to govern is one certain ground of dominion; he that is endued therewith, it is necessary that we should submit to him, it is reasonable willingly to admit him for our Lord: persons so qualified, Aristotle telleth us, have a natural title to dominion; as, on the contrary, persons weak, (in power or in wisdom,) unable to protect themselves, and unfit to manage things, are naturally subjects and servants. This ground eminently agrees to him, as being by nature the Almighty God, who can do all things, whom nothing
 John xiii. 3. can resist; and also for that *all things are given into his hand*, all things are put under his feet.
 Matt. xvi. Hence he is most able to protect us; *the gates of*
 18. *hell cannot prevail against his church; none can*
 John x. 28. *snatch us out of his hand; he is able to save to the*
 Heb. vii. 25. *uttermost them that come to God through him.*

2. To make, to preserve, to provide and dispense maintenance, are also clear grounds of dominion; for what can we more justly claim dominion over,

^a Ὁ πρῶτος (ὡς ἔοικεν) καὶ κυριώτατος νόμος, τῷ σώζεσθαι δεομένοι, τὸν σώζειν δυνάμενον, ἄρχοντα κατὰ φύσιν ἀποδίδωσι. Plut. in Pelop.

Προσῆκει γοῦν αἰεὶ τῷ κρείττονι κατὰ φύσιν ἡγεῖσθαι τοῦ χείρονος. Clem. Alex. Strom. vii. (p. 506.)

Τὸ δυνάμενον φύσει προορᾶν ἄρχον φύσει, καὶ δεσπόζον φύσει. Arist. Pol. i. 1, 3, 4.

than over our own inventions and works ; over that **SERM. XXII.** which we continually keep and nourish ; over that which wholly depends upon us, and subsists merely by our pleasure? Since then *in him we live, and move, and have our being* ; since we have derived ^{Acts xvii. 28.} all our being from him, (our being natural as men, and spiritual as Christians,) and are by him, *who upholdeth all things*, sustained therein ; since, as to ^{Heb. i. 3. Col. i. 17. John xv. 5. 2 Cor. iii. 5.} all our powers and in all our actions, we depend upon him ; for *without him we can do nothing* ; and *all our sufficiency is of him* ; he surely is our Lord, having an absolute right to dispose of us, to order us, and to use us, according to his discretion and pleasure. We thence have reason to render that acknowledgment of the elders in the Revelation to him ; *Worthy art thou, O Lord, to receive the glory, and the honour, and the power ; for thou hast created all things, and for thy will they are, and they were created* ; to confess and celebrate him as our Lord, for that, as it is in the Psalm, *It is he that made us, and not we ourselves ; we are his people, and the sheep of his pasture.* ^{Psalm. c. 3.} ^b Thus by birth, and privilege of nature, as the Son of God, heir apparent, and consort of eternal Majesty ; thus also, as concurring with his Father in the divinest actions of creation and providence, is *Jesus Christ*, the only Son of God, *our Lord*.

But beside these natural grounds of dominion over us, there are several others considerable, each of

^b Χριστὸς φύσει Κύριος, καὶ βασιλεὺς αἰδῖος ὧν οὐχ ὅτε ἀποστέλλεται μᾶλλον γίνεται Κύριος· οὐδὲ τότε ἀρχὴν λαμβάνει τοῦ εἶναι Κύριος, καὶ βασιλεὺς, ἀλλ' ὅπερ ἐστὶν αἰεὶ, τοῦτο καὶ τότε κατὰ σάρκα πεποιήται· καὶ λυτρωσάμενος πάντας γίνεται καὶ οὕτως ζώντων καὶ νεκρῶν Κύριος. Ath. Orat. iii. in Ar. pag. 385.

SERM. XXII. them, according to the standing rules of justice and equity, sufficient to found a good title thereto. We

(considering ourselves as the sons of Adam, in that state wherein Christ found us, or wherein we should now be, if he had not vouchsafed to come and redeem us) had attempted to withdraw ourselves from our due subjection to God, by wilful rebellion and disobedience; we thence had forfeited the benefit of God's favourable protection and providence for our good: we had become outlaws, dead in law, (*dead in trespasses and sins*;) we, instead of being subjects and servants of God, were become (or should have been) *aliens, and enemies to God by wicked works*, according to the natural *blindness of our minds not knowing* (or acknowledging) *God*; in our affections estranged and averse from him, in our practice opposite to his holy will and righteous laws, we in a manner were got out of God's possession; were in respect to him become imbecile and *lost*; we were *like sheep gone astray* out of the fold of his gracious care and governance; we had got other masters, and were come into other hands; like those who in the prophet confess, *O Lord our God, other lords beside thee have had dominion over us*. The Devil had got us into his power; we were *captivated* (or taken alive, as St. Paul phraseth it, ἐξωγρημένοι) *at his will*; we were detained under wretched subjection, overpowered, and oppressed by him; who therefore is called *the Prince and the God of this world*; to whose suggestions it hearkened, whose will it observed, whom it was prone even to worship and adore. The world also (whose *friendship is enmity to God*, which *all lieth in wickedness*) had prevailed over us, so as *to walk according to it*; to

Eph. ii. 1, 5.

Col. i. 21.

Rom. viii.
7, 8, 9.

Luke xix.

10.
Matt. xviii.

11. x. 6.
xv. 24.

Psal. cxix.
176.

Isa. xxvi.

13.
2 Tim. ii.

26.
Acts x. 38.

Col. ii. 13.
John xiv.

30. xvi. 11.
Eph. vi. 12.

ii. 2.
2 Cor. iv. 4.

James iv. 4.
1 John ii.

15.
1 John v. 19.

Eph. ii. 2.
Rom. vii.

23. vi. 12,
16, &c.

Tit. iii. 3.

be governed by its corrupt principles and vicious **SERM. XXII.** practices ; to be driven by its force, and drawn by its allurements, into evil. We were captives and slaves also *to the law of sin ruling in our members; serving divers lusts and pleasures*; being in our actions guided by a *carnal mind*, opposite to God and goodness ; swayed by sensual appetites, and hurried by violent passions to what is bad : this was the condition of mankind generally when Christ came, and would have so continued ; but out of it he came to deliver us ; by the merit of his blood, and power of his grace, to free us from the oppressions of all those usurping powers ; to recover and restore us into the propriety, possession, and protection of God. *He came to seek and to save that which was lost ; to save us from our enemies, and from the hand of all that hate us ; to deliver us out of the power of darkness, and to translate us into his own kingdom, the kingdom of righteousness, peace, and joy.* So that he hath acquired us to himself ; we being now *περιποίησις, an acquist* made by him, as St. Paul calleth us, and *λαὸς εἰς περιποίησιν*, as St. Peter speaks, *a people by acquisition* peculiarly appertaining to him : and divers ways we have been acquired to him, as to our Lord.

3. He hath acquired us by free donation from God his Father ; for *God hath given him power over all flesh ; God hath delivered all things into his hand ; God hath subjected all things under his feet.* Peculiarly God hath given unto him those who comply with his gracious invitations and suggestions ; his *sheep, that hear his voice, and follow him* ; them hath God given him, to govern them with especial favour, and keep them with a parti-

Rom. viii.
7, 8.

Luke xix.
10.
Matt. x. 6.
Luke i. 71.
Col. i. 13.

Rom. xiv.
17.
Eph. i. 14.
1 Pet. ii. 9.

John xvii.
2. xiii. 3.
Eph. i. 22.

John x. 27.

SERM. cular care; *Whom, saith he, thou hast given me,*
 XXII. *I have kept; and, This is the will of the Father*
 John xvii. *that sent me, that of all which he hath given me,*
 12, 6. vi. *I should lose nothing.*
 39.

4. Again, he hath acquired us by just *right* of conquest, having subdued those enemies unto whom (partly by their fraud and violence, partly from our own will and consent) we did live enslaved and ad-
 Col. ii. 15. dicted: them he vanquished, *having spoiled principalities, and powers, and made a show of them openly, triumphing over them.* Whence we rightly fall under subjection to him, as accessions to his victory; having formerly belonged to his enemies, and having by his mercy been preserved: he might justly have deprived us of liberty and of life; might have utterly destroyed us, or have detained us in woful misery, as dependents upon and partisans with his foes; ourselves together with them being found in
 Rom. v. 8, open hostility against him: but *according to his*
 10. *great mercy he saved us;* and did put us into a
 Col. i. 21. capacity of a free, comfortable, and happy life under
 Eph. i. 8. him, *calling us to his kingdom and glory.* We
 Tit. iii. 3. therefore being *subacti potentia*, (subdued by his
 1 Thess. ii. power,) become *jure subditi*, (in right subject to
 12. him,) [being *servati*, we are made *servi*;) being saved from death by him, we according to justice and reason become vassals to him, so that all our life should be devoted to his service; that (as it is
 Luke i. 74. in the hymn *Benedictus*) *being delivered out of the hands of our enemies*, (his enemies, and our enemies also, no less in truth and effect,) *we should serve him without fear.*

5. He hath also further acquired us to himself by *purchase*; having by a great price bought us, ran-

somed us out of sad captivity, and redeemed us from SERM. XXII.
grievous punishment due to us. We, as heinous sin-
ners and rebels, had forfeited our lives to God's law,
and were sentenced unto a miserable death; we had
lost our liberty, and were thrown into a grievous Rom. xi.
prison, fettered in guilt, lying under wrath, and re- 32. iii. 23.
served to punishment unavoidable; we were stripped Gal. iii. 22.
of all goods, all comfort, all hope and remedy: such
was the case of man, when he procured a redemp-
tion, a pardon, a deliverance, and restitution for us;
delivering up himself *a ransom for us all*; under- 1 Tim. ii. 6.
going a punishment for our sins, discharging our
debts, propitiating divine justice, acquitting us from Rom. viii.
all claims and pretences upon us; yea meriting for 34
us, a better state than we did ever before stand in:
thus *he purchased his church with his own blood*; Acts xx. 28.
whence, as St. Paul argues, *we are not our own, for* 1 Pet. i. 18.
we are bought with a price^c. In requital for such 1 Cor. vi.
mercies and favours so unexpressibly great, we can- 20. vii. 23.
not, either in gratitude or justice, owe less than our-
selves to be rendered up wholly to his dominion and
disposal; it is our duty therefore to be his subjects
and servants; and it was indeed the intent of his
doing so much for us, that we should be so: he did
all *gratis*, (most freely,) as to any precedent motive
beside his own goodness; but he would not do it
fruitlessly, as to effect; *To this end*, saith St. Paul, Rom. xiv.
*Christ both died, rose, and revived, that he might*⁹
be Lord both of the dead and living: He died for 2 Cor. v. 15.
all, that they, which henceforth live, should not live
to themselves, but unto him which died for them:

^c Οὐ γὰρ οὐρανὸν, καὶ γῆν, καὶ θάλασσαν δούς, ἀλλὰ τὸ πάντων τούτων τιμιώτερον, τὸ ἑαυτοῦ αἷμα καταθείς, ὅπως ἡμᾶς ἐξηγόρασε. Chrys. Ἀνδρ. 21.

SERM. and, *He gave himself for us, that he might redeem*
 XXII. *us from all iniquity, and purify to himself a pecu-*
 Tit. ii. 14. *liar people, zealous of good works.*

6. He likewise acquired a lordship over us by desert, and as a reward from God, suitable to his performances of obedience and patience, highly satisfactory and acceptable to God; *For this the Father loves me, because I lay down my life, that I may take it again: He humbled himself, becoming obedient to the death of the cross; therefore also did God exalt him, and gave him a name above every name: For the joy that was set before him, he endured the cross; and having despised the shame, sat down at the right hand of the glory of God:*
 John. x. 17. *We see Jesus, for the suffering of death, crowned*
 Phil. ii. 8. *with glory and honour: He drank of the brook in*
 Heb. xii. 2. *the way, therefore he hath lifted up his head: Because he poured out his soul unto death; therefore did God divide him a portion with the great, and he did divide the spoil with the strong, as the prophet expresseth it.*
 Heb. ii. 9. *Psalm cx. 7.*
 Psal. cx. 7. *Isa. liii. 12.*

7. We may add, that he hath acquired a good right and title to dominion over us, as our continual most munificent benefactor; by the great benefits he bestoweth on us, by the ample hire and large recompense he pays us. He affords us a sure protection under him, and a liberal maintenance; high privileges, and ample rewards for our service: it is no Egyptian bondage that he would detain us in, requiring hard labour, and yielding no comfort or recompense; but it is a most beneficial and fruitful service. Christ hath promised *to withhold no good thing* from his servants; nothing requisite for the support or convenience even of this temporal life,
 Ps. lxxxiv. 11. xxxiv. 9, 10.

(for to them *who seek the kingdom of God, and its righteousness, even all these things shall be added,* SERM. XXII. or cast in ;) but especially most inestimable precious Matt. vi. 33. Rom. viii. 28. recompenses he hath promised, and will certainly bestow in spiritual and eternal blessings; *He will* 2 Pet. i. 4. Rom. ii. 6. *render to every man according to his works; to them who by patient continuance in well-doing seek glory and honour and immortality, eternal life; saith St. Paul: and, Being freed from sin,* Rom. vi. 22. *saith he again, and made servants to God, ye have your fruit unto sanctification, and in the end everlasting life:* a fruit to sanctification, that is, all benefits conducing to our spiritual welfare here, and hereafter a life in perpetual joy and happiness. To them who have been diligent in performing their tasks, and improving their talents committed to them now for his interest and honour, he will one day say, *Well done, good and faithful servants, enter into* Matt. xxv. 21. *your Master's joy:* and, *Blessed,* Rev. xi. 18. *saith our good Master, are ye, when men shall revile you, and* Matt. v. 11, 12. *speaking all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake. Rejoice, and be exceeding glad, for great shall your reward be in heaven.* Now he that is at such care and charges for us, who feeds and furnishes us so plentifully, who rewards our small pains, our poor works, our unprofitable services, (such indeed we must confess all that we can do to be,) with so high and bountiful wages, him surely most justly we should esteem, and most willingly call, our good Lord and Master.

8. Yea further yet, our Saviour Jesus is not only our Lord by nature, and by acquisition in so many ways, (by various performances, deserts, and obligations put on us,) but he is also so by our own deeds,

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by most free and voluntary, most formal and solemn, and therefore most obligatory, acts of ours. ^cHe is our Lord and King by election; we finding ourselves oppressed by cruel tyrants and enemies, groaning under intolerable slaveries, loaded with heavy burdens, plunged into grievous distresses, tormented with anxious fears, regrets, and sorrows, had our recourse unto him, upon his gracious invitation, offering us deliverance, ease, and refreshment, under his most equal and gentle government; *Come unto me, all ye that labour, and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest—Take my yoke upon you;—for my yoke is easy, and my burden light:* so he was pleased to invite us; and so we did, or have at least seemed and pretended to undergo his yoke, freely submitting to his government: we have vowed perpetual allegiance and fealty to him, as to our lawful Prince; we have promised entire subjection to his will, and sincere obedience to his laws; we have engaged, forsaking all things, to follow him; to follow him as our Captain, and to fight resolutely under his banners, against the common enemies of his glory and our salvation. We did, συμφωνεῖν, (as it is in the parable,) *contract* and agree with him upon certain conditions and considerations, most advantageous to ourselves, to be his faithful servants, and diligently to perform his work: we renounced all other masters; yea resigned up all claim to any liberty or power over ourselves; becoming absolutely devoted to his will and command: this we did at our baptism, in most express and solemn manner, and in every re-

2 Tim. ii. 3.
iv. 8.

Matt. xx. 2.

Chrys.
Ἄνδρ. 21.

^c Καθάπερ ἡμεῖς οἰκετὰς ἀγοράζοντες, αὐτοὺς τοὺς πωλουμένους πρότερον ἐρωτῶμεν εἰ βούλονται ἡμῖν δουλεῦσαι· οὕτω καὶ ὁ Χριστὸς ποιεῖ· ἐπειδὴν, &c. οὐ γὰρ κατηναγκασμένη ἡ δεσποτεία αὐτοῦ ἐστι, &c. Chrys. Ἄνδρ. 21.

religious performance we confirm our obligation; when we acknowledge his right over us, and our duty toward him; when we implore his protection, his succour, and his mercy; when we promise our humble respect and obedience to him: if our daily confessions do signify any thing; if our vows and protestations have any truth or heart in them; if our prayers are serious, our praises are hearty, our communions have in them any thing of good earnest and sincerity; we do by them continually tie faster the band of this relation and duty toward him; he by our renewed choices, and consents, and promises, and acknowledgments, doth appear to be our Lord. But let thus much suffice for explication of this point; or for considering upon what grounds Jesus Christ, the only Son of God, is our Lord: now for practical application of the point thereof.

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1. The general influence which this doctrine may and should have upon our practice is very obvious and palpable. If we are truly persuaded that Christ is our Lord and Master, we must then see ourselves obliged humbly to submit unto and carefully to observe his will; to attend unto, and to obey his law, with all readiness and diligence; for, *Why call ye me, Lord, Lord, and do not the things that I say?* Luke vi. 46. is the expostulation of our Lord himself, implying it to be a vain and absurd profession, an irrational and illusive pretence we make, when we avow and invoke him as our Lord, but withal disclaim his authority in our practice, by slothfully neglecting or wilfully disobeying his commands: *Not every one that saith, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven; that is, not he that* Matt. vii. 21.

SERM. makes loud and eager professions (crying Lord, over
XXII. and over again) is in God's esteem a loyal subject, or

Matt. vii.

22.

Luke xiii.

25.

performs the will of God. *Many*, saith our Saviour again, *shall in that day* (in that great day of final account and recompense) *say unto me, Lord, Lord, have we not in thy name prophesied, and in thy name cast out devils, and in thy name done many wonderful works? and then will I profess unto them, I never knew you; depart from me, ye that work iniquity.* Not only bare professions and acknowledgments are insufficient, but even the fairest and most plausible actions done in the name of Christ will avail nothing, without real obedience to the law of Christ; even then, when such actions are performed, Christ doth not know them; that is, doth not esteem them his servants; the working of iniquity rendering them incapable of that name and privilege. Such persons do, as St. Paul speaks, *profess to know him*, (or acknowledge him as their Lord,) *but with their works they deny him; who are disobedient, and to every good work reprobate,* (that is, upon trial found bad and false;) *they*, as St. Peter says, *deny the Lord that bought them.* Do ye not know, saith St. Paul, *that to whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey, his servants ye are whom ye obey?* and, *Every one*, saith our Saviour, *that doeth sin is the servant of sin:* and, *By whom* saith St. Peter, *a man is overcome, to him he is made a servant, or enslaved,* (δεδούλωται.) It is not what we say, but what we do; not what we would seem, but what we indeed are, doth really constitute,

Tit. i. 16.

2 Pet. i. 16.

Rom. vi.

16.

John viii.

34.

2 Pet. ii. 19.

Πάντιμος

καὶ Ἰνδοξος,

καὶ ζωοποιός

προσηγορία.

Mar. Lugd.

Euseb. v. 2.

and truly denominate us servants : we not only shall lose the rewards and privileges granted to the servants of Christ, but we do even forfeit all claim to the very name, if we disobey his commands, being indeed properly servants to those lusts which sway us ; to that devil, whose pleasure we fulfil ; to that world, whose bad manners we follow : we do but invade and usurp the name of Christians, if our practice is not conformed to the precepts of our Lord^c.

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2. Indeed the consideration of this point doth clearly demonstrate to us the great heinousness of sin ; how many follies, iniquities, basenesses, and ingrati- tudes lie complicated therein : the madness of opposing irresistible power, and dissenting from in- fallible wisdom : the unworthiness of offending and abusing immense goodness ; the injustice and disloy- alty which are couched in the disobedience of him, who by so many titles, and upon so many obliga- tions, is our Lord : the abusiveness of evacuating all his laborious and expensive designs in acquiring us ; the levity and giddiness of disavowing him by our practice, whom we so often have acknowledged our Lord, and vowed entire subjection unto.

3. Again, if Christ be our Lord, then are we not our own lords, or our own men ; we are not at liberty, or at our own disposal, as to our persons or our actions : those rules of the civil law, *that a servant can possess nothing of his own, that no profit* ὁ δούλος οὐ μὲν δισπό- του δούλος ἔστιν, ἀλλ' ὅλος ἑαυτοῦ.

^c Mendacium est Christianum se dicere, et opera Christi non facere. *Ambr.* It is a lie, to call one's self a Christian, and not to do the works of Christ, as St. Ambrose saith. Omnino nihil prodest nomen sanctum habere sine moribus ; quia vita a professione discordans abrogat illustris tituli honorem per indignorum actuum vilitatem. *Salv. de Gub. Dei, iii. sub fin.*

Arist. Pol.
i. 3.

SERM. *can simply accrue to him*, but all in result must
 XXII. go to his lord : that he is reckoned nobody in law,

Τῷ δούλῳ
 ἐστὶ τὸ ζῆν
 μὴ ὡς βού-
 λισται.
 Arist. Pol.
 vi. 2.

and the like, do most perfectly agree to us in regard to Christ, who is upon so many accounts absolutely our Lord, infinitely more than one man can be to another. We consequently must not think to have our own wills, we must not attend our own business, we must not please our own appetites, or gratify our own desires, or enjoy our own pleasures, or follow our own fancies, or regard our own profits, or seek our own honour ; we must not undertake or prosecute any thing merely our own, or further than doing so is subordinate unto or consistent with the service, interest, and glory of our Lord : otherwise we do constitute ourselves the lords and masters, in effect renouncing and casting off him : if he be truly our Lord, it is his will and word that should be the rule of all our actions ; which we should diligently attend unto, which we should readily observe : it is his business, that we should with especial care mind, and most earnestly prosecute ; it is his advantage and credit, that we should propound unto ourselves, as the main aims of all our endeavours. Whatever we design or undertake of moment, we should do it with this formal consideration and reference ; doing it as the servants of Christ, from conscience of our duty to him, with intention therein to serve him, with expectation of reward only from him ; accord-

1 Cor. x. 31. *ing to those apostolical precepts ; Whether we eat, or drink, or whatever we do, we should do all to*

1 Cor. vi. *the glory of our Lord : we must glorify him with*
 20. *our bodies and our spirits, which are his : we must*

2 Cor. v. 15. *not live to ourselves, but to him that died, and rose again for us : since whether we live or die, (that*

is, whatever action we set upon relating either to life or death,) *we are the Lord's*; we should direct all to his honour, profit, and service. SERM. XXII.

4. If Christ be our Lord, (absolutely and entirely such,) then can we have no other lords whatever, in opposition to him, or in competition with him; or otherwise any way than in subordination and subserviency to him; *No man*, as he doth himself tell us, *can serve two lords*; that is, two lords having collateral or equal authority; their injunctions will interfere, oppose, or supplant one the other; our affections will incline to one more than to the other; at least we shall be detained in hovering suspense; our leisure, our care, our endeavour being employed in the service or attendance of one, will force us to neglect and disappoint the other; *Ye cannot serve God and Mammon*; serving wealth (that is, eagerly affecting it, and earnestly pursuing it) is inconsistent with our duty to Christ; the like may be said of honour, of pleasure, of curiosity, of any worldly thing; for, *He that will be a friend of the world is thereby*, saith St. James, *constituted an enemy of God*; and if he thereby be made an enemy, he surely can be no good servant; a servant being (as the philosopher calls him) *humilis amicus*, a meaner sort of friend; who performeth service out of goodwill and affection; like St. Paul, who discharged that high and laborious service, of preaching the gospel, incumbent on him, and of that kindly necessity which he expresses, saying, *The love of Christ constrains me*; or as St. Peter enjoins those particular servants of Christ (employed by him in teaching and guiding his people) to do their duty, *μὴ ἀναγκαστῶς, ἀλλ' ἐκουσίως*, *not by constraint, but willingly*; Matt. vi. 24.
James iv. 4.
2 Cor. v. 14.
ix. 17.
1 Pet. v. 2.

SERM. *not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind ; or as St.*
XXII. *Paul chargeth all servants, μετ' εὐνοίας δουλεύειν, to*

Eph. vi. 7. *serve with good-will, as to the Lord, and not to*

men. It is indeed the proper nature and the necessary condition of this service, that we decline, forsake, renounce, detest all other obligations, all affections, all encumbrances, which may avert us from a

Luke xiv. 33. *close adherence thereto. Whoever, saith he, he be of you, that forsaketh not (or, who renounceth not,*

who biddeth not farewell to, ὃς οὐκ ἀποτάσσεται) all that he hath, cannot be my disciple, or my follower

Luke xiv. 26. *and servant : If any man cometh after me, and do not hate his father, and mother, and wife, and*

children, and brothers, and sisters, yea and his own life, he cannot be my disciple ; he cannot indeed truly and heartily be so, who in love and observance of Christ will not readily forsake and lose all.

5. Particularly therefore, if Christ be our Lord, we are thereby disobliged, yea we are indeed prohibited, from pleasing or humouring men, so as to obey any command, to comply with any desire, or to follow any custom of theirs, which is repugnant

Gal. i. 10. *to the will or precept of Christ : If, saith St. Paul, I did yet please men, (that is, humour, soothe, or*

flatter them, so the word ἀρέσκειν doth import,) I were not the servant of Christ ; that is, I were not such in effect, I did in so doing not behave myself as a servant of Christ ; as it becomes such an one,

1 Cor. vii. 23. *and as such an one is obliged to do. And, Ye, saith he again, are bought with a price, be not the*

servants of men, (or, ye are not the servants of man, so the words will bear rendering ;) that is, ye therefore do not, or ye therefore ought not, to per-

form service to men, absolutely as such, or with ultimate relation unto them; but when ye lawfully and allowably do it, ye do it out of conscience, and regard to Christ, as his servants. We may indeed, yea in duty we must, obey men humbly and willingly, diligently and faithfully, in our stations, and according to our conditions, as we are placed and called in this world, either as subjects or servants; but we must do this in subordination to our principal and supreme Lord; in obedience to his command, and with regard to his service; so we are taught by St. Paul; *Servants*, saith he, *obey your masters according to the flesh with fear and trembling*, (that is, very respectfully and carefully,) *in singleness of heart, as to Christ; not in eye-service, as men-pleasers, but as the servants of Christ; doing the will of God from the soul; serving with good-will, as to the Lord, and not unto men*: and, *Be subject*, saith St. Peter, *to every human constitution*, διὰ τὸν Κύριον, *for the Lord*; (that is, out of conscientious regard or affection to the Lord; because he is our Lord;) *as free, and not having your liberty for a cloak of maliciousness, but as the servants of God*: yea, *Whatsoever* (saith that wise instructor, St. Paul, again) *ye do, do it heartily, as to the Lord, and not to men; knowing that of the Lord ye shall receive back the recompense of inheritance; for ye serve the Lord Christ*.

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Eph. vi. 5,
6, 7.

1 Pet. ii. 13,
16.

Col. iii. 23,
24.

6. It is, we see, (which may be another improvement of this consideration) not only an engagement, but an encouragement to the performance of all duty; particularly to the performance of those hard duties, (so contrary to natural will and stomach,)

SERM. cheerful obedience and submission to men ; who
 XXII. often, as St. Peter intimates, are σκολιοὶ, *crooked*, or
 1 Pet. ii. 28. untoward and harsh in their dealings with their
 servants ; to whom yet upon this consideration he
 enjoins us willingly to yield obeisance, no less than
 to *the good and gentle* ; for that in this and all
 other performances of duty we do serve a most
 equal and kind Master, who will graciously accept
 our service, and abundantly requite it ; a Lord, that
 will not suffer his servants to want any needful sus-
 tenance, any fit encouragement, any just protection
 or assistance ; who will not only faithfully pay them
 their promised allowance, but will advance them to
 the highest preferment imaginable. No man ever
 had reason to complain with them in the prophet ;
 Mal. iii. 14. *It is vain to serve God, and what profit is it that*
we have kept his ordinances ? No ; the Devil him-
 self with envy and regret observing the benefits
 and blessings which the pious man enjoyed in re-
 Job i. 9, 10. gard to his faithful service, could not but say ; *Doth*
Job serve God for nought ? hast thou not made a
hedge about him, and about his house, and about
all that he hath on every side ? thou hast blessed
the work of his hands, and his substance is in-
creased in the land. No wonder, argued the de-
 tracting spirit, and little thank or praise is due to a
 servant, whose service is so bountifully rewarded.
 Indeed our Lord is not only just and faithful, so as
 to render unto every man ἴδιον μισθὸν κατὰ τὸν ἴδιον
 1 Cor. iii. 8. κόπον, *a proper reward answerable to his proper*
pains ; but he is exceedingly, beyond expression, li-
 beral in bestowing on his servants retributions infi-
 nitely surpassing the desert and worth of all their
 labours : for their small, weak, faint, imperfect, and

transitory endeavours, (by all which he is indeed SERM. XXII. really nothing the richer, or the greater,) he returneth blessings in nature, in degree, in duration, immensely great, precious, and glorious. He fails not here to feed them with food convenient, to clothe them decently, to supply all their needs, to comfort them in all distresses, to keep them in all safety, to deliver them from all evil; he afterwards conferreth on them a kingdom, an incorruptible and unfading crown; a state of perfect joy and endless glory.

7. It is a great comfort also for a Christian (how mean and low soever in his worldly condition) to consider the dignity and excellency of this his relation; how great and how good a Lord he serveth; that the greatest princes are his fellow subjects; (for, *He is the King of kings and Lord of lords: All kings shall fall down before him; all nations shall serve him.* Rev. xix.¹⁶ Psal. lxxii.¹¹ Yea, that the highest angels are his fellow servants; (as the angel in the Revelation told Rev. xxii.8. St. John.) That although his Lord be so high in power and glory above all, yet he is so gracious, as Eph. i. 20. not to neglect or despise him; but condescendeth to Luke i. 48. regard the lowest of his servants with equal care and favour as the highest; *He accepteth not the persons of princes, nor regardeth the rich more* Job xxxiv.¹⁹ *than the poor; for they all are the work of his hands,* said good Elihu; and they all, we might add, are the price of his blood.

8. And as it is a comfort to the meanest, so it is no shame or disparagement for the greatest of men to serve such a Lord; it is a relation in itself more worthy and honourable than the highest dignity or preferment in the world: to wear a crown, how rich soever; to command the whole earth; to possess all

SERM. XXII. the land, and all the gold under heaven, are beggarly, trivial, and sordid things in comparison thereto; a servant of Christ (the apostolical style) is a style far more glorious than all those windy titles, which the greatest monarchs assume to themselves; having such a place in God's peculiar regard and care doth exceed all privileges and advantages, all glories and dignities, which any person is capable of: well therefore did St. Paul, in respect to *the excellency of the knowledge of Jesus Christ his Lord*, esteem all such things (all worldly privileges and benefits) *as loss and as dung*, as things detrimental and despicable; wisely did the holy apostles forsake all things, (all their dearest relations, all their sweetest enjoyments, all their secular occupations,) to follow such a Lord. (*Behold*, saith St. Peter, *we have let go all things, and have followed thee.*) Most just and reasonable are those sentences, pronounced against those vainly proud, or perversely contumacious people, who are ashamed to obey him, or do reject his government; *Whosoever shall be ashamed of me or of my words, him shall the Son of man be ashamed of, when he comes in the glory of himself, and of his Father, and the holy angels.* Them who proudly disdain to serve him here, will he with just and sad disdain reject hereafter from his face and favour; yea with dreadful vengeance will he punish their perverseness; *Those mine enemies*, will he say, *that would not have me reign over them, bring them hither, and slay them before me.*

Phil. iii. 8.

Luke xviii.
28.

Luke ix. 26.

Luke xix.
27.

9. St. Paul also maketh use of this consideration, to press upon superiors their duties toward their inferiors; their duties of equity, meekness, kindness,

mercy, pity, and all humanity; *Masters*, saith he, **SERM. XXII.**
yield unto your servants that which is just and equal; knowing that ye also have a Master in **Col. iv. 1.**
heaven: and, *Ye masters*, saith he again, *do the* **Eph. vi. 9.**
same things to them, (perform the like good offices, shew the same good-will to your servants,) *forbear-*
ing menaces; knowing that your Master also is
in heaven, and there is no respect of persons with
him. Thus in Leviticus God commandeth his people
not to rule over their servants with rigour, assign- **Lev. xxv.**
ing this reason, For they are my servants, &c. And **42, 43, 55.**
we know how our Saviour, as he doth commend and
bless those wise and honest servants, who, being ap-
pointed over his household, (that is, being placed in
any superior rank or charge,) do behave themselves
justly and kindly to their fellow-servants, *dispens-* **Matt. xxiv.**
ing to them their food in due season; so upon those **45, 49. xviii.**
who injuriously or rudely do beat or abuse their fel- **28, &c.**
low-servants; who are harsh, rigorous, or unmerciful
in exactions of debt, or in any other dealings toward
them, he denounceth severe chastisement. *A ser-* **2 Tim. ii.**
vant of the Lord (that is, one employed by Christ **24.**
in any office or charge) *must not fight, but must be,*
gentle unto all, saith St. Paul; such indeed should
be the humility and goodness of Christians one to-
ward another, that the greatest of them should stoop
to the meanest offices and expressions of good-will
to their brethren; *He*, saith our Lord, *that will be* **Matt. x. 44.**
great among you, let him be your minister; and
he that will be first of you, let him be your ser-
vant.

10. The consideration indeed of Christ being our Lord, is in general an inducement to charity, to all sorts of charity. *We must*, saith St. Paul, *walk* **Eph. iv. 2, 5.**

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worthy of our calling, with all lowliness of mind, and meekness, with longsuffering, forbearing one another in love, endeavouring to keep the unity of spirit in the bond of peace; because we are members of the same body, whereof Christ is the head, and fellow-servants of the same Lord. It is an endearing and obliging relation; it becometh us and concerneth us, being so of one family, to be courteous and gentle, kind and helpful one to another; to maintain peace, quiet, and love one with another; it is a just duty and respect to our common Master, who loveth order and peace, who hateth confusion and dissension in his house; who is himself full of charity toward every one of his, and therefore hath enjoined it as the especial duty, hath declared it to be the most distinctive character of his servants and followers; Hereby, saith he, shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another.

2 Cor. xiii.
11.

John xiii.
15.

11. Particularly this consideration doth oblige us to exercise that piece of charity and of justice which consists in forbearing rash and harsh censure; which practice is not only very uncharitable and unjust toward our brethren, but it is also a wrongful and arrogant encroachment upon our Lord himself, unto whom only the right of decision in such cases doth appertain; unto whose infallible and impartial judgment both they and we are obnoxious; *Who art thou, saith St. Paul, that judgest another's servant? (or domestic; ἀλλότριον οἰκέτην:) to his own master he standeth or falleth: and, Why dost thou judge thy brother? or why dost thou set at nought thy brother? and, We shall all be presented before the*

Rom. xiv.
4, 10.

Jam. iv. 12. *judgment-seat of Christ: There is, saith St. James,*

one Lawgiver, who is able to save and to destroy; who art thou that judgest another? It is, we see, an invading our Lord's right and authority, without most evident and reasonable cause, to censure or condemn our fellow-servants. SERM.
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12. The consideration of this point our Saviour doth also improve, as an engagement to imitate himself in the practice of all virtue and piety; especially in the practice of charity, humility, and patience. It is proper for a servant to follow and attend upon his master in all places and in all performances; to compose himself in behaviour to the manners and example, to conform himself to the garb and condition of his Lord: is it not absurd and unseemly, that the servant should be more stately, or more delicate than his master; that he should slight those whom his master vouchsafes to respect; that he should refuse to undertake those employments, should scorn to undergo those hardships, which his master doth willingly condescend unto? To such purpose our Saviour discourseth; impressing by this argument on his disciples the duties of humility, charity, and patience, by him exemplified for that very end; *Ye call me, saith he, Master, and Lord; and ye say well, for so I am: if I then, your Lord and Master, have washed your feet, ye ought also to wash one another's feet; for I have given you an example, that ye should do as I have done to you.* And having directed his disciples to the patient enduring of reproaches, affronts, and injuries put upon them, he enforces his precept by subjoining, *The disciple is not above his master, nor the servant above his lord: it is enough for the disciple to be as his master, and the servant as his* John xiii.
13, 14, 15.
Matt. x. 24.
Luke vi. 40.
John xv. 20.

SERM. *lord.*; that is, the servant in all reason ought to be
 XXII. very well content, if he find such usage as his lord

Luke xxii.
26.

Matt. xx.
25.

1 John
iii. 16.

hath willingly and patiently undergone. And he thus again impresses these duties on them; *He that is greatest among you, let him be as the younger; and he that is chief, as he that doth serve: for whether is greater, he that sitteth at meat, or he that serveth? but I am among you as he that serveth.* Yea, St. John raiseth this consideration so high, that he saith thus; *Because he laid down his life for us, we also ought to lay down our lives for the brethren.*

13. Finally, for our satisfaction and encouragement, we may consider, that the service of Christ is rather indeed a great freedom than a service; it is a reducement into a most desirable estate, wherein we fully enjoy that wherein liberty is defined to consist, *ἐξουσίαν αὐτοπραγίας*, *power of doing whatever* (as reasonable and wise men) *we please* ourselves to do; wherein all things are lawful to us, excepting only such things as are unprofitable to us, or hurtful. What Aristotle made the character of a just prince, (whose government doth nowise prejudice true liberty,) that he doth not in his government chiefly aim at his own profit, but his subjects' good, is perfectly true of our Lord: he is indeed capable to receive no private benefit to himself, beside satisfaction in our welfare; all his laws and commands, all his administrations and proceedings, are purely directed to our advantage. Even the statutes which God gave to Israel by Moses are said to have been *commanded for their good*, not for any good that could accrue to God from their observance: much more are the laws of Christ purely such; conducing

Quæ est
vera liber-
tas? inno-
centia.
Epict.

Deut. x. 13.
vi. 24.

Neb. ix. 13.

to the health, the safety, the peace, the comfort, the **SERM.**
 joy, the happiness both of our bodies and souls; of **XXII.**
 the present temporal life here, and of our immortal
 state hereafter; *His religion is profitable unto all* Tim. iv. 8.
things, having promise of the life that now is, and
of that which is to come. Well therefore might
 St. James call the law of Christ *a perfect law of* James i. 25.
liberty; well might our Saviour say, *If the Son set* John viii.
you free, then are ye free indeed. What the Stoics ^{36.}
 vaunted of themselves, the Christian modestly and
 truly may say, that he is the only free man; it is
 this philosophy only, to which those words of Seneca
 may truly be applied; *You must serve philosophy,*
that you may attain true liberty: for, if to be above
 the reach of all considerable evil or mischief; if to
 be safe from all enemies, and secure from all impres-
 sions of fortune; if to have no reason much to fear,
 or much to grieve for any thing; if not to desire
 things base, or things immoderate; if to have an
 especial command over one's self, is (as those philo-
 sophers define it) properly liberty; then is he most
 free that serves our Lord. If to be rescued from
 the servitude of disorderly passions and base vices is
 the greatest freedom, then the good Christian chiefly
 doth enjoy it. ⁸ *A good man, saith St. Austin, al-*
though he serve, is free; a bad man, although he
reign, is a slave; not of one man, but, which is

[†] *Philosophiæ servias oportet, ut tibi contingat vera libertas.*
Sen. Ep. 8. et 88.

Non homines timere, non fortunam; nec turpia velle, nec
immodica; in se ipsum habere maximam potestatem, &c. Sen.
Ep. 75.

⁸ *Bonus etiamsi serviat, liber est; malus etiamsi regnet, servus*
est; nec unius hominis, sed quod gravius est tot dominorum,
quot vitiorum. Aug. de Civ. Dei, iv. 112.

SERM. *more grievous, of so many lords, as of vices.* Such

XXII. indeed is the benignity of our Lord, that he treats
 his faithful servants rather as friends than as ser-
 vants ; *Ye are*, saith he, *my friends, if ye do what-*
 ever I command you ; *I call you no more servants.*

Yea he bears to them the affection of a brother, and
 affords them the honour to be so styled ; *Go*, saith
 he, after his resurrection, to Mary Magdalene, *to my*
brethren, and say unto them, I ascend unto my

Father, and your Father ; to my God, and to your
God : and, Ἴδετε ποταπὴν ἀγάπην, *See ye what love*
the Father hath given us, that we should be called
the sons of God.

Full of so many practical uses is this excellent
 point ; the which I leave to be further deduced by
 your meditation.

Now, *The God of peace sanctify you wholly ;*
and I pray God your whole spirit, and soul, and
body be preserved blameless unto the coming of
our Lord Jesus Christ ; to whom be glory and
 praise for ever. *Amen.*

Who was conceived by the Holy Ghost.

S E R M O N XXIII.

THE INCARNATION OF OUR LORD.

MATT. i. 20.

For that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Ghost. Τὸ γὰρ ἐν αὐτῇ
γεννηθὲν
ἐκ πνεύματος
ἁγίου.

WITHOUT any preface, or circumstance of speech, we observe three particulars couched in these words. 1. The incarnation of Jesus our Lord, implied by the word τὸ γεννηθὲν, *that which is conceived*, or generated. 2. The principal efficient cause of this incarnation; the Holy Ghost; by whose immediate operation, without any active influence of man, he was generated, *is of the Holy Ghost*. 3. The concurrence of the blessed Virgin Mary, as the subject of that divine virtue and operation; he was *conceived in her*. Upon each of these particulars, being all of them considerable points of that faith which we daily profess, (and especially proper subjects of our meditation at this time,) I shall reflect, observing somewhat profitable for our edification both in way of right knowledge, and in tendency to practice.

I. Our Saviour Jesus was conceived and born; that is, the only Son of God, our Lord and Redeemer, the same *who was from the beginning*, and John i. 1, &c.

SERM. did, as St. John in the entrance of his Gospel
 XXIII. teacheth us, from all eternity *exist with God*, the
 1 John i. 1. eternal *Word of God, by whom all things were
 made, was in the fulness of time* conceived and
 born ; that is, had a production agreeable to the na-
 ture of man, becoming thereby truly and really a
 man ; which wonderful mystery is in scripture by
 various phrases expressed and implied ; by the Word
 being incarnated, that is, *being made*, or becoming,
 John i. 14. *flesh ; God being manifested in the flesh ; The*
 1 Tim. iii. *Son of God being sent in the likeness of sinful*
 16. *flesh ; partaking of flesh and blood ; his taking*
 Rom. viii. *the form of a servant, being made in the likeness*
 3. *of men, being found in fashion as a man, assuming*
 Heb. ii. 14, *the seed of Abraham ; his descending from heaven,*
 16. *coming forth from the Father, being sent, and*
 Phil. ii. 7, *coming into the world ; The day-spring from on*
 8. *high visiting us, eternal life being manifested ; the*
 John iii. 13, *result of what is signified by these and the like ex-*
 31. vi. 33, *pressions, that, The blessed and glorious Person, who*
 38, 50, 51, *before from all eternity did subsist in the form or*
 58. iii. 17. *nature of God, being the Son of God, one in nature*
 x. 36. xvii. *with his Father, (the express image, or exact cha-*
 18. *racter of his substance,) did by a temporal genera-*
 1 John iv. *tion truly become man, assuming human nature*
 2, 3, 9. *into the unity of his Person ; by a real conjunction*
 Gal. iv. *and union thereof to the divine nature, in a manner*
 John xvi. *incomprehensible and ineffable. He did, I say,*
 27, 28. *truly become man, like unto us in all things, as the*
 Luke i. 78. *apostle saith, sin only excepted ; consisting, as*
 1 John i. 2. *such, of all the essential ingredients of our nature ;*
 Phil. ii. 7, *endued with all our properties and faculties, subject*
 8. *to all passions, all infirmities, all needs, adherent or*
 John x. 30. *incident to our nature and condition here.*
 xiv. 9.
 1 John v. 7.
 Col. i. 15.
 2 Cor. iv. 4.
 Heb. i. 3.
 ii. 17.
 iv. 15.

He was not only (as the Gnostics and some other heretics have conceited) in shape and outward appearance, (as a spectre, deluding men's sight and fancy,) but in most real truth, a very perfect man ; having a real body, figured and circumscribed as ours, compacted of flesh and blood, visible and tangible ; which was nourished and did grow, which needed and received sustenance, which was tender and sensible, frail and passible ; which was bruised with stripes, torn with scourges, pricked with thorns, pierced with nails, transfixed with a spear ; which was mortal, and underwent death by expiring its breath, and being disjoined from the soul that enlivened it. He had also a soul, endued with the same faculties as ours ; with an understanding, capable of learning and improvement ; (for he was, as man, ignorant of some things which he might know ; and *he grew*, it is said, *in wisdom and in stature* :) with a will, subject and submissive to the divine will ; (for, *Let this cup*, said he, *if it be possible, pass from me : but however let not my will, but thy will be done* : and, *I seek not my own will, but the will of the Father which hath sent me* :) with several appetites, of meat, of drink, of sleep and rest ; (for we read that he was hungry, that he thirsted, that he was weary :) yea with various passions and affections, (*φυσικὰ καὶ ἀδιάβλητα πάθη*, I mean, that is, natural and irreprehensible passions ;) and these of the most troublesome and afflictive sort, such as zeal, pity, sorrow ; the which were sometime declared by very pathetical significations, and are expressed in high terms ; as upon occasion of his friend Lazarus's death it is said, *He groaned in spirit and was troubled* ; he then, and upon other

SERM.
XXIII.

Vid. Athan.
in tract.

cont. Apol-
linar.

Phil. ii. 8.

Ἐν σχήματι
υἱοθεσίας ὡς
ἀνθρώπου.

Rom. viii.

3.

Mark xiii.

32.

Luke ii. 52.

Matt. xxvi.

39.

Luke xxii.

42.

John v. 30.

Matt. xxi.

18.

John iv. 6,

7.

Matt. xvi.

23.

John ii. 17.

Mark iii. 5.

John xi. 33,

5.

SERM. occasions, out of pity and sorrow, did *weep*; and ye
XXIII. know what excesses of sorrow, what anxieties and

Περίλυτος.
Matt. xxvi.
38.

Ἀδμονῆν.
Matt. xxvi.

37.
Ἀγωνία.

Luke xxii.
44.

Τεταράσσεται.
John xii.

27.
Ἐπαμβύσθαι.

Mark
xiv. 33.

Πειρασμοῖς.
Luke xxii.

28.
* Heb. iv.

15.

agonies, what tribulations, disturbances, and amazements the evangelists, using those very terms, describe him to have undergone at his passion; so that, as the Apostle to the Hebrews speaketh, * *We have not an high priest that could not sympathise (or sympathise with) our infirmities, but who was in all points tempted (or exercised and proved) as we are, yet without sin.*

So it appeareth, that the Son of God (co-eternal and co-essential with his Father) became the Son of man; truly and entirely partaking of the nature and substance of man, deficient in no essential part, devoid of no property belonging to us; exempt from no imperfection or inconvenience consequent upon our nature, except only sin; the which is not a natural so much as a moral evil; did not arise from man's original nature, but proceedeth from his abused will; doth rather corrupt than constitute a man.

Now concerning this great dispensation several inquiries and considerations may be made, concerning the manner of it, how therein God did assume our nature; or how therein God and man subsist united; concerning the reason of it, whence it proceeded, and why it was designed; concerning the use and influence of it, which it should have upon our practice.

1. As for the first point, the manner of this mystery, we may well, in discretion and modesty, answer with the schoolman; *It is not in man to define what manner of communication this is, whereby the human nature is communicated to the Word*; we cannot indeed otherwise than by negation determine,

Cujusmodi
sit hæc
communi-
catio, qua
natura hu-
mana com-
municatur

not otherwise than by comparison explain it. No words perhaps, which we do use to signify our conceptions about these material and inferior things, will perfectly and adequately suit to a mystery so much remote from the common objects of our knowledge, so far transcending our capacity; to affirm positively, that this wonderful incarnation did come to pass, that this incomprehensible and ineffable union doth persist in this or that manner, may be rash and dangerous; it would cease to be admirable, if we could fully conceive or express it: but this justly and safely we may assert, that whatever manner of conception or expression about it doth plainly derogate from the divine perfections, or is irreconcilably repugnant to the nature of things, or disagreeeth with the tenor of revealed truths evidently connected unto or depending on this mystery; or which (either directly and immediately, or obliquely and by manifest consequence) doth contradict the language and doctrine of the holy scriptures, is to be rejected by us: whence we may for exclusion of errors and mistakes about this point, with the holy Fathers, and particularly with the great council of Chalcedon, assert, that in the incarnation of our Lord the two natures, divine and human, were united *ἀσυγχύτως, ἀτρέπτως, ἀδιαιρέτως, ἀχωρίστως*.

SERM. XXIII.

Verbo, non est hominis definire. *Alens.*

Syn. Chalc. Act. v. (fin.) (pag. 340.)

1. The natures were, I say, united *ἀσυγχύτως*, that is, without any confusion or commixtion; for such a way of blending would induce a third nature different from both, such as resulteth from the composition and contemperation of the elements into a mixed body; such a commixtion being supposed, our Lord would be neither God nor man, but another third kind of substance, such as must not without

SERM. any ground or authority be supposed ; that would
 XXIII. destroy, diminish, or alter the properties of each ;
 which is unsound to say, and impossible to be ; for
 the divine nature is not capable of any diminution
 or alteration : wherefore both natures in this mys-
 tery do subsist entire, distinct, and unconfused, each
 retaining its essential and natural properties.

2. The incarnation was performed ἀτρέπτως, that
 is, without conversion or transmutation of one nature
 into another : the divinity could not be turned into
 humanity ; for how could God, (the eternal, self-sub-
 sistent, most simple, and immutable Jehovah,) as
 such, be anywise changed or made, become infirm
 and passible, consist of body and soul, suffer and die ?
 Nor could the humanity be turned into divinity ; for
 how could that which did not subsist at all before
 the incarnation be therein converted into another
 thing ? why should our Saviour ever be called man,
 when his humanity was by translation into divinity
 destroyed ? why is it said, *the Word was made flesh*,
 if the flesh was changed into the Word ? to omit,
 how impossible it is, that one substance should be
 transmuted into another, especially a corporeal into
 a spiritual, a finite into an infinite ; to omit likewise
 the many dangerous consequences of this position,
 and its inconsistency with many principal and plain
 doctrines of our religion, particularly the real passion
 and death of our Lord, which could not be incident
 to him otherwise than as retaining the true nature
 of man.

3. The natures were also joined ἀδιαρέτως, undivid-
 edly ; that is, so as they have not distinct subsist-
 ences, or do not constitute two persons : for there
 is but one Christ, one Person, to whom being

God and being man are truly and properly attributed. SERM.
XXIII.

4. We must also understand the natures to be united *ἀχωρίστως*, inseparably; so that they never are severed, the union is never dissolved; the same person never ceasing to be both God and man; not even then, when our Lord, as man, did undergo death; for he raised himself from the dead, he reared the temple of his own body, being fallen: as being God, he was able to raise himself; as being man, he was capable to be raised by himself; the union between God and man persisting, when the union between human body and soul was dissolved.

We might add, in further exclusion of erroneous conceits, that this mysterious union was not made *κατὰ παράστασιν*, *by assistance*, or close presence only, nor *κατ' ἐνοίκησιν*, merely *by inhabitation*, nor *κατὰ σχέσιν*, *by relation*, nor *κατ' ἀξίαν*, *by estimation*, nor *καθ' ἀρμονίαν*, *by conformity*, in will and practice, nor *κατὰ ταυτοβουλίαν*, *by consent*; as Nestorius and other heterodox dogmatists anciently, in opposition to the catholic exposition of this mystery, did imagine: but it doth not seem worth the while to discuss those antiquated conceits, or with more subtilty to intrigue the point.

As for illustration of it by comparison, I shall only (passing over divers more wide and improper resemblances; such as those of Bellarmine, the union of a man's arm to his body, the incision of a bough into a tree, and the like) observe, that nature doth afford us one similitude very apposite for explication of this mysterious union; which is the union of a man's soul and body, whereby he becometh one person. The soul and body are two substances, very

Salmeron.
apud Ge-
rard. in loc.
Exeget. p.
441. Bel.

SERM. XXII I. different in kind, in properties, in dignity : the one of itself material, extended, divisible, passive and corruptible, lifeless and senseless ; the other immaterial, indivisible, incorruptible, self-moving, endued with life, knowledge, passion : both of them are also capable of separate existence, or of subsistence by themselves ; yet are these two, although in a manner difficult for us to conceive or comprehend, closely united together, and do concur to the making up a man ; and that so as to remain still in substance distinct, each retaining its natural properties, without any confusion, or any conversion of one into the other ; so also that from them the same man receiveth the denominations of corporeal and spiritual, of mortal and immortal : in a like manner (although in a degree more admirable and incomprehensible) are the divine and human natures conjoined in our Lord ; for, as we hear in the Athanasian Creed, *As the reasonable soul and flesh is one man, so God and man is one Christ.* So much for the manner.

2. As for the reason why the Son of God did assume our nature ; the chiefest and clearest reason thereof was, God's design thereby to exercise and demonstrate his immense goodness, mercy, and pity toward us ; *So God loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son : In this the love of God was manifested, that God sent his only begotten Son into the world, that we might live by him : Through the tender mercy of our God, the day-spring from on high did visit us :* it was *χρηστότης καὶ φιλανθρωπία*, the *benignity and philanthropy of God*, which induced him to engage his Son upon such a debasement and exinanition of himself, that we thereby might be raised to a capacity of salvation.

John iii. 16.

1 John iv.

Rom. v. 8.

viii. 32.

Διὰ σπλάγ-

χνα ἰλίου

Θεοῦ.

Luke i. 78.

Tit. iii. 4.

If we further desire to contemplate the wisdom of SERM.
 God in this admirable proceeding, and to know why XXIII.
 God, among other means and methods alike (for all God's
 we can know) possible to him, did choose in this choice is
 way to transact our redemption; it may be answer- reason
 ed, that it becometh us rather to adore the depth of enough.
 God's wisdom herein, than to sound it, or to hope by
 searching to reach the bottom of it: yet some con-
 gruities of this method to the reason and exigency of
 things are in the scripture intimated to us, and in
 some manner are discernible by us, sufficient to re-
 commend the divine wisdom therein to our admira-
 tion; reasons may be assigned why our Redeemer
 should be Θεάνθρωπος, why God, why man^f. It well
 became God to stoop down thus, that, as his good-
 ness toward us was infinite, so the demonstrations
 thereof, to his glory and our benefit, should be an-
 swerably such; which perhaps could not otherwise
 be, than by such a condescension: as a prince could
 not make any other so great attestation of favour to
 his vassal, as by descending from his throne, laying Eph. i. 6.
 aside his majesty, putting himself into a like condi- Εἰς ἵπαινον
 tion, conversing freely with him, subjecting himself δόξης τῆς
 to the same laws and duties, enduring the like hard- χαρίτος αὐ-
 ships and inconveniences with him. τοῦ.

It was expedient that our Redeemer should be Ἐνδύξας δι-
 God, that he might be able by his power to save us; καισίνους.
 to remove those huge obstacles that crossed our sal-
 vation, to subdue those potent enemies which opposed
 it; to command and conquer nature, to vanquish the
 powers of hell, to abolish death in our behalf.

It was requisite that he should be the coessential,

^f Nisi enim esset verus Deus, non adferret remedium; nisi esset
 homo verus, non præberet exemplum. *Leo M. de Nat. Serm. i.*

SERM. natural Son of God, that by the nearness of his rela-
XXIII. tion to God, by the supereminent dignity of his per-
son, by the immense value of his merit, he might
conciliate God's favour to us, fully appease his wrath
incensed against us, and satisfy his justice abused by
our offences.

It was convenient, that his doctrine should carry
with it the highest certainty and strongest efficacy;
that his example should challenge the greatest re-
gard and strictest imitation; that his laws should
have supreme authority, and with greatest advantage
oblige us: fit therefore it was, that he should be God,
and have the character of divinity stamped upon
what he said and performed.

The redemption and salvation of man did import
an honour too august for any creature to be dignified
with; it was a work too difficult and mighty for any
but God to achieve; it was not proper that any
creature should be principal in managing an affair of
such height and importance: needful and expedient
therefore it was, that our Saviour should be God.

It was also requisite, upon many accounts, that
he should be man: that by perfectly obeying God's
commands, and submitting patiently to God's will,
as man, he might procure God's favour toward man;
that as man had deeply wronged and offended God,
so man also should highly content and please him;
Rom. v. 19, in St. Paul's language, that *as by one man's disobe-*
&c. *dience many were made sinners*, (that is, were con-
demned and exposed to death, upon God's just dis-
pleasure for that one man's transgression, backed
with the like in his posterity,) *so by the obedience*
of one man many should be made righteous, (that
is, all who would imitate his obedience should be ab-

solved from guilt, exempted from punishment, and received into grace; God being well pleased with and reconciled to mankind, especially to his followers, in regard to that man's dutiful observance of his will &c.) Decent it was, that as man did approve, so man also should *condemn sin in the flesh*; that as man by wilful self-pleasing did incur misery, so by voluntary suffering he should recover happiness; *Ἐπεκε, * It did, as the apostle saith, become him, for whom are all things, and by whom are all things, in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the Captain of their salvation perfect through suffering.*

SERM. XXIII.
Rom. viii. 3.
That he might taste death for man. Heb. ii. 9.
Col. i. 22.
* Heb. ii. 10.

It was also fit, that he who was designed to intercede for our welfare, to propitiate for our faults, to succour and relieve our distresses, should be tender of our good, and sensible of our needs; that he therefore should by nature and experience be disposed *συμπαθεῖν, to compassionate our infirmities, and μετριοπαθεῖν, to be gently affected toward us, in respect of our ignorances and errors; whence ὥφειλε, he, saith the divine apostle again, according to the design appointed to him, and undertaken by him, ought, or it did behove him to be in all things like unto his brethren, that he might be a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God; that he might propitiate for the sins of the people; for in that he hath himself suffered being tempted, he is also able to succour those that are tempted.*

As the Devil did overbear man—
Evæ advocata. Iren.
Heb. iv. 15.
v. 2.

Heb. ii. 17.
Ἄνθρωπος ψιλὸς σώσαι οὐκ ἰσχυρὸς Θεὸς γυμνὸς παθεῖν οὐκ ἠδύνατο.
Procl. in Conc. Eph. pag. 5.

& He by his humanity did unite mankind in fraternity.

Τὴν ἔχθραν ἐν τῇ σαρκὶ αὐτοῦ καταργήσας. Eph. ii. 15.

* Ὅτι μέλη ἐσμὲν τοῦ σώματος αὐτοῦ, ἐκ τῆς σαρκὸς αὐτοῦ καὶ ἐκ τῶν ὀστέων αὐτοῦ. Eph. v. 30.

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He was to be man also, for that by appearing in human shape, visible and audible, familiar and agreeable to us, he was qualified for that great design of declaring God's will and intentions toward us in a more easy, less amazing, and more obliging way, than otherwise could have been : for that hence likewise he could, with more advantage, describe an exact copy of righteousness for us to transcribe ; shewing us exemplarily how as men we should behave ourselves ; how we should moderate our sensual appetites, how govern our passions, how order and employ all the powers of our soul and members of our body ; how pass through all conditions, and entertain all events befalling us ; it not being indeed otherwise possible, that so lively and suitable a pattern of transcendent charity, meekness, humility, and patience, could have been exhibited to us.

Acts xvii.
31. x. 42.

Fit it also was, that he who was to be appointed our judge, substitute of the supreme Judge invisible, should be, as God, (of perfect wisdom, and so able to discern all matters of fact, to distinguish all points of right ; of perfect rectitude, so as never willingly to discost from truth and equity,) so also man ; visible and audible to us, without surprising astonishment and terror ; apt to screen us from the insupportable presence of God ; endued with a natural tenderness of good-will and compassion toward us, disposed to temper needful severity with competent mildness.

'Ανακεφα-
λαιώσασθαι.
Eph. i. 10.
καὶ ἀποκατ-
αλλάξαι.
Col. i. 20.
1 Tim. ii. 5.

In fine, it was most congruous, that he who was designed to *recapitulate and reconcile*, as St. Paul speaketh, *all things in heaven and earth*, to be the great *mediator* and *peacemaker* between God and

in, for the repairing God's honour and dispensing SERM.
 grace, for the *purchasing our peace* and pro- XXIII.
 ring our salvation, that he should be most nearly
 ied unto both parties; that consequently, if pos-
 sible, (and what is to God, the author of this econo-
 my, impossible?) he should be both God and man;
 son to God, and brother to us; the same in nature
 with God, in kind with us. Such reason and wis-
 dom is discernible in this dispensation.

III. Now for the practical use of this doctrine,
 or it is not a doctrine merely speculative, and bar-
 ren of fruit, or practical use :) it should, first, have
 powerful influence upon our minds, causing us,
 with high degrees of love and gratitude, to adore
 the infinite goodness of that God, who hath been
 pleased himself to stoop so low, that he might ad-
 vance us from the lowest depth of meanness and
 retchedness, to the highest pitch of honour and
 happiness that we are capable of: what words can
 express, what thought can apprehend a favour so
 conceivable and ineffable? Well might St. Paul
 call it *ὑπερβάλλουσαν τῆς γνώσεως ἀγάπην*, *love trans-* Eph. iii. 19.
ending all knowledge: well may heaven admire,
 and earth be astonished, and hell tremble at the dis-
 closure of such a mystery, at the accomplishing such
 miracle of grace and mercy; that the sovereign
 majesty of heaven, the eternal Lord of glory, the
 world's great Maker, the only Son of God, and heir
 of all things, should become a poor, small, weak, and
 frail man; should dwell in a tabernacle of flesh;
 should converse with silly, wretched, and frail mor-
 tals here; should be exposed to want, disgrace, and
 pain: ὡς βάθος, O depth of goodness and mercy un-
 searchable! if this will not, what consideration can

SERM. raise us, what benefit can affect us? what prodigious
 XXIII. ingratitude will it be, to be regardless or insensible
 of kindness so wonderful?

2. Another great use of this point is to engage us, as universally to all obedience, so particularly to the duties of humility, of patience, and of charity. Did the Son of God thus willingly submit, and so abase himself; and shall we then be refractory, shall we exalt ourselves; shall we refuse any appointment, or repine at any proceeding of God? Did he from the highest pitch of glory supercelestial voluntarily descend into this gloomy region and state of ignoble obscurity; did he, abandoning immense wealth, freely embrace extreme poverty; did he gladly sequester himself from those ineffable joys above, to converse with sorrow and sadness here, in this valley of tears, for God's sake, and ours; and shall we be unwilling to do any thing for God's sake, or to part with any thing for him? To these purposes doth St. Paul
 Phil. ii. 6, apply the consideration of this point; *Let, saith he, 7, 8. the same mind* (the same humble, patient, meek, charitable mind) *be in you, which was in Christ Jesus; who being in the form of God—emptied himself, taking upon him the form of a servant; being made in the likeness of men, and being found in fashion as a man, humbled himself, becoming obedient unto death:* it was the greatest argument and instance of humility, patience, and charity, that could be, for him, that did exist in the form of God, thus to debase himself, to partake of our nature, and submit to our state: and, *Know, saith that*
 Vid. 1 John iv. 10, 11. apostle again, *the grace* (or graciousness) *of our*
 2 Cor. viii. 9. *Lord Jesus Christ, that being himself rich, for your sake he became poor,* (being rich as God, and

Lord of all things, he put himself into this mean SERM.
and poor condition of man,) *that ye, through his* XXIII.
poverty, might be rich: it was a consideration
surely most proper to his purpose of inciting unto
charity ^h.

3. The consideration of this point should raise
our minds to a sense of the dignity of our nature,
accompanied with dispositions of heart and deport-
ments of life answerable thereto: by our Lord's in-
carnation our nature is so advanced, that we become
nearly allied to God, of the blood-royal of heaven,
in this respect overtopping all the creation of God;
so that hereby, as the Apostle to the Hebrews dis-
courseth, that of the Psalmist was verified concern-
ing man; *Thou hast crowned him with glory and* Psal. viii. 5.
honour, and hast set him over the works of thine Heb. ii. 7,
hands; thou hast put all things under his feet: the
angels themselves cannot boast of such an honour;
for *he took not the nature of angels, but he took* Heb. ii. 16.
the seed of Abraham: being therefore so highly i. 5.
dignified, we should have a mind suitably great and
noble, loving, delighting in, aiming at the most ex-
cellent things, void of base cares, of sordid desires,
of unworthy designs; we should, in all our conver-Phil. ii. 15.
sation, demean ourselves worthily and decently, like Matt. v. 48.
the brethren of Jesus and children of God ⁱ; that 1 Pet. i. 15,
we may not disparage and disgrace this illustrious 16.
alliance. As our Lord did vouchsafe, in most con-Vid. Leo-
descensive grace, to resemble us, so should we, with nem, P. de
Nat. Serm.
vi.

^h Ἐορτάζομεν ἐπιδημίαν Θεοῦ πρὸς ἀνθρώπους, ἵνα πρὸς Θεὸν ἐκδημήσωμεν,
ἢ ἐπανέλθωμεν. Naz. Orat. 38.

ⁱ Agnosce, Christiane, dignitatem tuam, et divinæ consors fac-
tus naturæ, noli in veterem vilitatem degeneri conversatione re-
cidere. Leo de Nat. Serm. i.

SERM. a generous and honest ambition, aspire to resemble
 XXIII. him ; as he stooped to humanity, so let us rear our-
 selves to a kind of divinity, in purity of mind and
 sanctity of life ; so St. Gregory Nazianzen exhorteth ;
^k *Let us, saith he, be as Christ, since Christ is be-
 come like us : let us, for his sake, be gods, seeing
 he is become man for us.*

4. The consideration of this point should fill our
 hearts with spiritual comfort and joy ; there never
 can be a greater occasion or juster cause of rejoicing
 than this, that our Lord is born and come : it is sig-
 nally *evangelium, good tidings* ; never news more
 welcome hath come into the world ; never report
 more grateful was heard by mortal ears : it is news
 from heaven, and the best that ever came thence ;

Luke ii. 10.
 Εὐαγγελί-
 ζομαι ὑμῖν
 χαρὰν μί-
 γάλην.

Behold, (said the angel that brought it, and a mes-
 sage it was most worthy the mouth of an angel,) *I
 tell good tidings of great joy, which shall be to
 all people* ; news, at which all heaven was pleased
 and ravished with joy, breaking presently forth into

Luke ii. 13.

hymns of praise and congratulation ; *There was
 with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host,
 praising God, and saying, Glory be to God on
 high, on earth peace, and good-will to men.* In
 this, if we mark it, all the grand causes of extraor-
 dinary joy and festivity do conspire.

Is the birth of a prince ever by honest subjects en-
 tertained and celebrated with joy ? Behold a Prince
 born to all the world ; a Prince that cometh to rule
 mankind with perfect equity and clemency ; to bring
 with him all peace and prosperity ; to achieve the
 most noble exploits that could be undertaken in our

^k Γενώμεθα ὡς Χριστὸς, ἐπεὶ καὶ Χριστὸς ὡς ἡμεῖς. Γενώμεθα θεοὶ δι'
 αὐτὸν, ἐπειδὴν καὶ κεῖνος δι' ἡμᾶς ἄνθρωπος. Greg. Naz. Orat. 41.

behalf, to protect us in most assured safety, to defend SERM. XXIII.
us from all evil, to subdue and destroy all the ene-
mies of our welfare, to rescue us from the greatest
slaveries and miseries, to settle us in perfect happi-
ness ; he bringeth *salvation from our enemies, and* Luke i. 71,
from the hands of all that hate us ; so that being ⁷⁴
delivered from the hands of our enemies, we might
serve him without fear in holiness and righteous-
ness before him all the days of our lives.

Is victory glorious and joyful ? See the invincible Rev. vi. 2.
warrior is issued forth into the field, *conquering and* Luke xi. 22.
to conquer ; he that shall quell, disarm, and rifle *the* John xvi.
strong one, that shall rout all the forces of hell, that
shall defeat sin, and slay death itself, that shall sub-
due the world, and subject all things to himself : the
Captain of our salvation appeareth, triumphing in
humility ; the great blow is given ; the Devil's pride
and envy are abased ; all the enemies are amazed,
are daunted, are confounded at his presence ; they
cannot stand, they break, they scatter, they flee be-
fore him. ³³

Is the publishing of peace acceptable ? Behold
eternal peace between heaven and earth, a general
peace among men, a peace of conscience between
man and himself, is now established and proclaimed :
the illustrious ambassador, the noble hostage, the in-
fallible pledge thereof is arrived ; *preaching peace* Eph. ii. 17.
to them that are far off, and to them that are Acts x. 36.
near.

Is recovery of liberty comfortable unto slaves and
captives ? Behold the Redeemer is come, the great
ransom is laid down sufficient to purchase the free-
dom of whole worlds : innocence appearing in human
nature hath unlocked the prison of sin, in which we

SERM. were closely detained ; hath broken the shackles of
 XXIII. universal guilt, which sorely pinched mankind : he
 Gal. iii. 22. is come, who is anointed to preach (αἰχμαλώτοις ἄφε-
 Luke iv. 18. σιν) *dismission to the captives.*

Is the coming of a good friend to be congratulated ? Behold, the best friend to all mankind (bringing with him most wholesome advice, most needful succour, most seasonable consolation) is arrived to visit us, and dwell with us.

Is it a comfortable thing to be graced with honour ? What greater honour could mankind be dignified with, than this of receiving the Son of God into his kind and kindred ? What could more advance and adorn us, than this high relation ?

Is mirth seasonable to the day of marriage ? Behold heaven and earth this day are coupled, divinity is espoused to humanity, an eternal indissoluble knot of amity, of unity, is tied between God and man ; the great Bridegroom is come forth clad in his nuptial garment of flesh, ready to wed the church, his beloved spouse¹.

Is the sun's rising (after a long, dark, and cold night) cheerful and comfortable ? See, the *Sun of righteousness is risen, with healing in his wings ; dispensing all about his most pleasant light, and salutary influences ; The dayspring from on high hath visited us*, diffusing an universal light upon the souls of men, dispelling the night of ignorance and error, *shining out to those that sit in darkness and the shadow of death, and guiding our feet*

¹ In natali Domini quasi in nuptiis spiritualibus sponsæ suæ ecclesiæ Christus adjunctus est, tunc processit sponsus de thalamo suo, hoc est verbum Dei de utero virginali. *Aug. de Temp. Serm. ii.*

the way of peace: Arise, shine, for thy light SERM. XXIII.
come, and the glory of the Lord is risen upon

e, &c. Never did heaven with so clear and serene Isa. lx. 1.

countenance smile upon earth, as it did this day,

when this super-illustrious luminary (this *bright* Rev. xxii. 16.

morning star, as he is called in the Apocalypse) Ἄστὴρ λαμ-

spring up above our horizon. From this aus- πρὸς καὶ ὀρ- θρινός.

picious day commenced the revocation of that fatal

se, by which we were exiled from paradise, con-

demned to death, exposed to hell; the reinstating

in a condition of hope, in a capacity of happiness;

return of life and joy into this region of corrup-

tion and disconsolateness: this is the day, which *all*

nations desired, and earnestly longed for, (with an

implicit sense;) which the good patriarchs foreseeing

rejoice; which the prophets in so magnificent

visions did predict and presignify. In our Lord's

nativity all mankind was in a manner born, or did

live; was restored from a manifold necessity of

living; from lying dead in the guilt, and under the

curse of sin; from having our bodies irrecoverably

ruined by corruption, and our souls immersed into

that *second death* of endless misery. It is in effect

before the world's nativity that we celebrate, an-

swered to that of our Lord; the beginning of the

new, better, spiritual, and eternal life to men: all

reason therefore we have upon this consideration

ought to rejoice; how extremely stupid and sense-

less are we, if the apprehension of goods so many,

excellent, hence accruing to us, doth not inspire

our hearts with a grateful cheerfulness! *This is the* Ps. cxviii.

work which the Lord hath made; let us rejoice and ^{24.}

glad therein.

Conceived by the Holy Ghost, Born of the
Virgin Mary.

S E R M O N XXIV.

THE INCARNATION OF OUR LORD.

MATT. i. 20.

Τὸ γὰρ ἐν
αὐτῇ γινώ-
σκω.

For that which is conceived in her, is of the Holy Ghost.

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IF every circumstance of our Lord's wonderful incarnation deserveth to be considered, as affording matter of good instruction, and serving to excite devout affection; then surely the principal causes and ingredients thereof may demand a special regard from us; such are those which are couched in this text; the efficiency of the Holy Spirit, by which it was accomplished; the concurrence of the blessed Virgin Mary, as the subject, in whom the divine virtue did work it: upon which two particulars we shall reflect, in order.

I. It was the *Holy Ghost*, by the singular virtue and operation of whom, without intervention of any man, or earthly father, the blessed Virgin became

Luke iii. 23.
Matt. xiii.
55.

impregnated and did conceive. Joseph was, ὡς ἐνομί-
ζετο, in outward esteem, the father of our Saviour,

John vi. 42.
Luke iv. 22.

(for, *Is not this*, said they, *the carpenter's son? Is not this the son of Joseph?*) the modesty of his holy mother being preserved from misprision under

the shroud of wedlock, during the time that by God's order the mystery and truth of things was to be concealed from general notice, *until the day of his being shewed and manifested to Israel*; but God only was in truth his Father, his incarnation being performed by the miraculous efficacy of God's holy Spirit; upon which account (beside his eternal generation) he was also the Son of God; or, *Therefore*, said the angel to his mother, *that holy thing which shall be born of thee, shall be called the Son of God.*

SERM.
XXIV.

Luke i. 80.
John i. 31.

Luke i. 35.

The matter of fact was well known to Joseph by revelation, and to the blessed Virgin herself by her conscience also; and by them it was attested to the holy apostles; their attestation being seconded by the miracles of our Lord, together with all the potent arguments which confirm his doctrine: nor do we find, that even the adversaries of our Lord did ever offer to impeach his parents of imposture, or did anywise trouble them about this report coming from them. And it is so clearly and fully affirmed in the Gospels, that it is prodigiously strange that here have been lately some (called Josephites) who have questioned it, upon weak pretences of discourse; whom we cannot otherwise consider, than as intolerably audacious perverters of scripture, or subverters of its authority and use; for surely nothing there can be deemed certain, if this point is not. The fact therefore we must take for granted; and, for our further instruction about it, we shall consider three particulars; the *manner* of it, the *reasons* for it, the *practical use* whereto it may be applied.

Apud Epi-
scopium—

1. The manner of that operation, whereby the Holy Ghost did effect the human generation of our

SERM. Lord, is by the archangel Gabriel expressed to be
XXIV. from *the supervention of the Holy Ghost, and the*

Luke i. 35.
δύναμις ὑψί-
στου.

divine power overshadowing the blessed Virgin;
the which words being of so general interpretation,
and as to precise meaning so little intelligible by us,
may well serve to bound our curiosity, and to check
further inquiry. Some indeed (as the followers of
Valentinus and Apollinarius, of old; as Menno, Ser-
vetus, and others, of late) have been so bold, as to
determine, that the Holy Ghost did bring from hea-
ven a body, which he did convey into the blessed
Virgin; or that our Saviour's flesh was formed of a
divine seed, from the substance of God himself; or
that in his conception the Holy Ghost did create
and impart somewhat of matter; but it is enough to
say, that these are rash and groundless conceits; the
holy Fathers, having weighed and discussed such
imaginationes, to prevent dangerous or misbecoming
thoughts and speeches, about a point of so sacred
nature, more soberly do teach, that our Saviour was
conceived by the Holy Spirit, not *σπερματικῶς, semi-*
nally; but *δημιουργικῶς, operatively*; οὐ διὰ συνουσίας,
not by copulation; but *διὰ δυνάμεως, by power*; not
de substantia Spiritus Sancti, of the substance of
the Holy Ghost; but *de potentia, by the virtue of*
it; and further than this, say they, *Generationem*
ejus quis enarrabit? Who can declare his genera-
tion, or exactly describe the manner of a performance
so very wonderful and sublime; to the which no ex-
perience doth furnish any event like or comparable?
When therefore it is said, that the conception, or ge-
neration, was *ἐκ Πνεύματος ἁγίου, of the Holy Ghost,*
the preposition *ἐκ* is to be taken for the same with
ὑπὸ, or διὰ, (as it is very commonly used,) denoting,

Damasc. iii.
2.
Just. Mart.
Apol. 2.
Aug. de
Temp.
Serm. vi.
P. Leo de
Nat. Serm.

not matter out of which, but efficiency by which the effect was derived. But, SERM.
XXIV.

2. Why was our Saviour conceived by the Holy Ghost? Divers reasons for it may be assigned.

1. It was needful for assuring the divinity of our Saviour, or his being the eternal Son of God. That the Messias, the Redeemer of the world, should be the Son of God, was necessary, according to the purpose of God, the ancient predictions, the general opinions and expectations of God's people, (often implied in the Gospels;) accordingly such he was as the coeternal Word in his divine nature; but it was requisite that he should also be such according to his human nature; that by his extraordinary generation, as man, his other more sublime generation (so much transcending human conceit) might be more credible, and the world might be convinced of his divinity; for men hardly would have been capable to believe him more than a man, whom they saw born in the common way of men: *Is not this the son of Joseph?* was an argument which they urged against him, when he spake about his *descent from heaven*, John vi. 42. and caused them to admire, when they observed the power of his miracles (Matt. xiii. 55.) and the wisdom of his discourse, (Luke iv. 22.) but easily might they be induced to admit a mystery, which was countenanced by so grand a miracle, as the birth of a child, by the divine power, without a father.

2. This was the most fit way of accomplishing that so necessary conjunction of the divine and human nature: a work of such grandeur and glory, of such grace and goodness, was not to be achieved by any other agent than by him, who is the substantial

Psal. ii. 7,
12.
1 Chron.
xxii. 10.
2 Sam. vii.
13.
Ps. lxxx.
27.
John i. 34,
49. xi. 27.
vi. 69.
Matt. xvi.
16.
Mark xiv.
61.
xxvi. 63.
Matt. viii.
29.
Mark i. 24.
Luke iv. 34.

SERM. virtue and love of God ; by whom we see all ex-
 XXIV. traordinary and most eminent works to have been

Acts ii. 11. managed, to whom commonly the *μεγαλεῖα Θεοῦ*, the majestic and magnificent things of God are ascribed; for in the creation of the world, it was *the Spirit of God* which moved upon the waters, forming things, and impregnating them with all kinds of life and vigour natural; he it is, to whom those signal works of Providence, the revelation of divine truth, the prediction of future events, the performance of miracles, the renovation of men's minds, and reformation of their manners, in a peculiar manner are attributed; so likewise to him this incomparably supernatural, glorious, and important act was most properly due.

3. It being necessary that our Saviour should be consecrated to his great functions, and perfectly sanctified in his person, as man ; and those performances (according to the mystical economy of things among the divine Persons) being appropriated to the Holy Ghost, the natural spring of all derived sanctity ; his efficacy must needs intervene to this purpose : if Jeremiah, St. John Baptist, and St. Paul, (persons designed for offices and employments in dignity, in consequence so far inferior,) were sanctified, and separated by the Holy Ghost from their mother's womb ; in how more excellent kind and degree was it requisite that he should be sanctified thereby, who was sent into the world to redeem and purify it from all filth and fault ? According to that saying of our Lord, *Say ye of him, whom the Father hath sanctified, and sent into the world, Thou blasphemest ; because I said, I am the Son of God ?* whereas the style of Gods was given to persons devoted to far meaner services.

Jer. i. 5.

Luke i. 15.

Gal. i. 15.

John x. 36.

4. It was needful, that the human nature, which God did vouchsafe so highly to advance, by assuming it to a personal conjunction and union with himself, should be clear from all stain and pollution; such as in ordinary propagation doth adhere to our *sinful flesh* and corrupt nature; that he whom God even as man would so dearly love, and so entirely be pleased with, should be void of the least inclination to iniquity or impurity; for, as the Psalmist telleth us, *God is not a God that hath pleasure in wickedness, neither shall evil dwell with him; he is of purer eyes than to behold evil, and cannot so much as look upon iniquity*; how then would he receive any defiled thing into so near an union, into so dear a regard, into so full a complacence? He therefore was to be thoroughly sanctified; and thence it was needful that his humanity should issue from the fountain of holiness, God's most holy Spirit.

SERM.
XXIV.
Futurum
hominum
Salvatorem
talis ortus
decebat,
qui et in se
haberetur hu-
manæ sub-
stantiæ na-
turam, et
humanæ
carnis in-
quina-
menta ne-
sciret.
Leo i. de
Nativ.
Ser. 2.
Rom. viii.
3.
Psalm. v. 4.
Hab. i. 13.

5. It in like manner was necessary, that he who was ordained to appease God's displeasure, and fully to reconcile him toward us, to expiate all our offences, thoroughly to redeem mankind from the guilt and from the power of sin; who with absolute authority was to teach, to exemplify, to command all righteousness, should himself *know no sin*: *Such an High Priest*, as the apostle saith, *became us, who was holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners; who had no need first to offer up sacrifices for his own sins*: the sacrifice expiatory for our offences was to be *a lamb without blemish and without spot*: whence he was to be fully sanctified; and to become τὸ ἅγιον, *that holy thing*, (absolutely,) as he was termed by the celestial messenger: whence from the source of sanctity, the Holy Ghost, whose proper

2 Cor. v. 21.
Heb. vii. 26,
27.

1 Pet. i. 19.

Luke i. 35.

SERM. name doth import holiness, whose proper work it is
 XXIV. to sanctify, he was to derive a perfect sanctity and
 purity in his sacred conception.

6. We may add, as an observable point, the analogy, or apposite resemblance thereof, between the
 Gal. iv. 19. conception of our Saviour for us, and his *formation in us*; his natural generation and the spiritual regeneration of Christians; his becoming our brother in the flesh, and our being made his brethren in the Spirit; both being effected by the same agent: as Christ was made true man, and partaker of our nature, so we become true Christians, *and consorts of the divine nature*, by the operation of the same divine Spirit: as he by the dispensation of God, so we by his grace *are born, not by blood, nor by the will of flesh, nor by the will of man, but of God*; hence doth accrue a new relation, and we become his brethren, not only as he was made like to us, but also
 1 Pet. i. 23. as we become like to him; and are *begotten of God*, by the same heavenly virtue, the same *incorruptible seed*.

It may indeed be an admonition to us, to labour after this spiritual conception, which will render us conformable to our Lord, and far more truly allied to him, than even his partaking our nature hath done; and indeed without that spiritual one, this carnal alliance will not signify any thing of benefit to us; it will little profit us, that he was born in
 2 Cor. v. 16. the flesh, if we are not *born of the Spirit*; without which generation *we cannot enter into the kingdom of God*.

3. The proper application of this point is to engage us on a thankful adoration of the divine goodness and wisdom; so fully, so fitly carrying on that

infinitely gracious work of our redemption ; all the divine Persons of the blessed Trinity in a particular manner conspiring, as in the designation, so in the execution thereof ; the Father mercifully destinating and sending his Son ; the Son willingly and gladly condescending to come ; the Holy Ghost effectually bringing him into the world ; to which blessed Trinity therefore we should render all humble reverence and hearty praise : and so much for the first particular observed in the text. SERM.
XXIV.

II. The next is, the concurrence of the blessed Virgin Mary to our Lord's generation ; *that which is conceived* (or generated) *in her*. τὸ ἐν αὐτῇ
γεννηθῆναι

The being generated (τὸ γενᾶσθαι, here) we may suppose to respect or to express his whole human generation, with the parts and progress thereof ; implying on the Virgin's part all that she as a mother did confer thereto ; wherein therefore are comprehended the following particulars ;

1. His conception of her substance, whence he is called *the fruit of her womb* ; and *a rod* (that is, a branch, or twig) *sprouting from the stem of Jesse* ; and, *Behold*, said the angel, *thou shalt conceive in thy womb*. Luke i. 42.
Isa. xi. 1.
συνλάβη ἐν
γαστρὶ.
Luke i. 31.

2. The nutrition, accretion, and entire conformation of his body, out of her blood and substance ; whence her womb is said to bear him, (*Blessed is the womb that bare thee*,) to have been *gravidated*, or great with child ; the which as it grew did swell her womb visibly ; so that *she was found*, or observed, by apparent signs, *to be with child of him*, or to have him in her womb. Luke xi. 27.
ἰγνυος.
Luke ii. 5.
Matt. i. 18.
ἐβρίθη ἐν
γαστρὶ ἰχου-
σα.

3. His nativity itself, or exclusion into the open world ; which is thus expressed by the evangelist ;

SERM. *The days were accomplished that she should be*
 XXIV. *delivered, and she brought forth her firstborn*
 Luke ii. 6, 7. *son.*

Whatever therefore any mother doth confer to the entire production of a child, is to be attributed to the blessed Virgin; whence she was truly and properly *the mother of our Lord*, and is accordingly often so called in the Gospels; whence also she hath been in the church defined to be and commonly styled θεοτόκος, the bearer and mother of God; that is, of him who is God; that term asserting the divinity of Christ and the unity of his person, [against Nestorius and his partisans; who said, that the Virgin was not properly θεοτόκος, but χριστοτόκος; and that he who was born, was not God, but ἄνθρωπος θεοφόρος, *a man carrying God*, or divinity, in him.]

Nest. ad
Cyrill. in.
Conc. Eph.
Cyrill.
Epist. ad
Nest.

Now for our instruction and use we may resolve the word *her* into three respects distinctly considerable; he was born of her, a Woman; he was born of her, a Virgin; he was born of her, Mary; each of which respects is pregnant with matter observable: he was born of a Woman, that was highly needful to be; of a Virgin, that was very requisite; of Mary, that doth involve divers circumstances of importance.

1. Our Saviour was born of a woman.

The Valentinian heretics of old did opine, that he was only born through a woman, or did merely pass through her, as liquor doth pass through a vessel; but that is a great error; for he was born in her, and of her; in our text it is ἐν αὐτῇ γεννηθὲν, *generated in her*; which in sound expresseth no more, than her containing him when conceived, but according to the force of the Hebrew particle א (be) answering to ἐν

here, is apt to signify more; and must be taken to do **SERM.**
 so in conformity to parallel expressions; as that of **XXIV.**
 St. Paul, *God sent forth his Son born ἐκ γυναικὸς, of Gal. iv. 4.*
a woman; and that of St. Luke (in the best copies,
 followed by our English translators) τὸ γεννώμενον
 ἐκ σου, *The holy thing that is born of thee, or out Luke i. 35.*
of thee.

Indeed of a woman he was born, that is, from the
 matter and substance of a woman: so as thereby to
 bear the relation of a kinsman to us, becoming con-
 sanguineous to all mankind, which *God did make Acts xvii.*
of one blood; whence *he is not ashamed to call us^{26.}*
brethren, [and alloweth us to be *of his flesh and of^{11-14.}*
his bones.] *Eph. v. 30.*

We may easily conceive that God could imme-
 diately have created a nature in kind and properties
 like to ours, and have assumed it; but that would
 not have so fitly served the design of reconciling
 himself to us, and redeeming us; to the effecting
 that in the most congruous way, not only a resem-
 blance in nature, but a cognation and proximity in
 blood was needful, or at least was very convenient
 and suitable: for our blood being tainted, our whole
 stock having forfeited its dignity and estate by the
 rebellious disloyalty of our common ancestors, it was
 expedient that it should be purged and restored by
 the satisfactory merit and acceptable fidelity of one,
 who was of our race and kindred. We being to
 be adopted and received into God's family, it was pro-
 per that business should be transacted by intervention
 of a common relation; according to the discourse of
 St. Paul, *God sent forth his Son, born of a woman, Gal. iv. 4,*
born under the law, that he might redeem those^{5.}
that were under the law, (that according to the ob-

SERM. XXIV. ligation undertaken by him, he performing the obedience required by the law, might redeem those who, being tied to obey the law, had yet transgressed it,) *ἵνα τὴν υἰοθεσίαν ἀπολάβωμεν, that (it followeth) we might receive the adoption*; that is, that we by virtue and in consequence of that birth from a woman, and of that obedience to the law performed by our brother, might be in capacity to receive the quality or state of sons to God.

It was likewise seemly that the Devil, who by the weakness of a woman had seduced man from his duty to God, had overthrown, triumphed over, and captivated God's creature, in just amends, for the reparation of God's honour, and our consolation, should by the strength and faithful constancy of one, proceeding from a woman, be himself defeated and debased; according to the mystical intent of that most ancient prophecy, or promise, *The seed of the woman shall break the serpent's head*; of the woman, the man is not mentioned; for,

2. Our Lord was born of a virgin: so it was anciently presignified and predicted; *a virgin shall conceive and bear a Son; a virgin; Almah, ἀπόκρυφος*, (so Aquila, with respect to the derivation of the word, did render it,) that is, *a recluse*; one who perhaps had seldom seen, who *never had known a man*.

This, it seemeth, was that *new thing* (that most strange and admirable thing) which God in the prophet Jeremiah did foreshew, that he *would create in the earth*, and which should then happen, when he would restore Zion, and establish a new covenant with his people; namely, *a woman shall compass a man*; a woman in a manner extraordinary, without

the concourse of a male, should conceive, and enclose in her womb a man; that very man who should accomplish the great matters there predicted and promised. So it was, and so upon divers accounts it was requisite that it should be. SERM.
XXIV.

For how otherwise apparently, to the sense and satisfaction of all men, could he be that which (according to ancient prophecies and common expectation, as also according to the exigency of things, and the tenor of divine purposes) he ought to be, both the Son of God and the Son of Man, otherwise than by coming of a virgin? He must be born of a woman, that he might truly be the son of man; he must be born of a virgin, that he might be clearly the Son of God; how otherwise could there be an effectual conviction of his divine original?

It was also decent and expedient, that the tabernacle in which God should reside and dwell, should be proper and enclosed; that the temple of the divinity should be holy and separate; that the soil, whence holiness itself would sprout forth, should be clear and pure from all sordid mixtures; that none should presume to touch the border of that holy mountain, where God so specially would manifest himself; that the lust of man should not approach that place, whence the glory of God would so illustriously shine forth. *Επειτα γὰρ τὸν ἱεὶ ἀφθαρσία τοῦ παντός ἐν τῇ ἀνθρωπίνῃ βίῃ γινόμενον, ἀπὸ τῆς ὑπερβολῆς αὐτοῦ τῇ γνησίου τῆς ἀφθαρσίας ἀξίωσθαι. Greg. Nyssa. in Christi Nat. (tom. ii. p. 776.) *Exod. xix. 11.

It was also most convenient for exciting due attention and regard, for begetting faith, for procuring reverence and admiration in men, that our Redeemer should enter on the world in a manner so peculiar and miraculous: for who that heareth of such an event, can forbear to mind it, and ponder on it? who can doubt him to be the Son of God, whom by

SERM. sufficient and certain attestation he learneth to have
 XXIV. been conceived without any concurrence of man? who will not readily defer high veneration to him, who appeareth in a manner so glorious and supernatural?

3. Moreover, our Saviour was born of Mary; of that singular person determined and described in the Gospels; of her that was espoused to and did live with Joseph; with Joseph the carpenter; who was born in the town of Bethlehem, who lived in the city of Nazareth in Galilee; who both according to natural and legal extraction was descended in a direct lineage from king David, being, as St. Luke saith, *of the house and family of David*, and who by consequence did lineally come from Abraham. She herself was also of the same stock and family; as may be collected from circumstances intimated in the story, and certainly may be deduced from the prophecies concerning our Saviour's stock, with the assertions implying their accomplishment.

'Εξ ὧν καὶ
 πατρὶς Δα-
 βίδ.
 Luke ii. 4.
 i. 27.

Of *Mary* therefore, by blood and progeny a princess, extracted from the most illustrious stem on earth; not only famous among men, but (which is infinitely more) especially dear to God; who yet in external condition was very mean and poor, living obscurely in habitation with an artisan, of a painful and not gainful trade.

Luke i. 48.

As for her personal qualifications, they were excellently worthy; for in disposition of mind she was very religious and devout toward God; in the temper of her spirit, very sweet and calm, very modest, meek, and humble; such the passages occurring in the Gospels concerning her do shew her to have been; such particularly that most excellent hymn ejacu-

lated by her (wherein we may discover a spirit ravished with the most sprightly devotion imaginable ; a devotion full of ardent love, of humble thankfulness, of hearty joy, tempered with most submissive reverence) demonstrateth her to have been.

Of a mother so related, and so qualified, our Saviour was born ; both which points were requisite.

She was so related, for the declaration of God's truth, fidelity, and constancy, in accomplishing those ancient predictions and promises made to the Fathers ; to Abraham, that *in his seed all the families of the earth should be blessed* ; to David, that *of the fruit of his loins God would raise up Christ to sit upon his throne* ; concerning whom, as by many passages in the gospel it appeareth, God's people had a general expectation and persuasion, that he should be *the Rod out of the stem of Jesse, and a Branch growing out of his roots ; in whom the horn of David should bud ; who should raise the tabernacle of David that was fallen, and rule over the kingdom of Jacob for ever* : and that our Lord should be born at Bethlehem, that he should be called a Nazarene, were circumstances touched in the Prophets, for the verification whereof it was needful that the mother of our Lord should be thus related.

She was also to be so duly qualified, as to her state and mind ; being homely in state of life, and holy in disposition of mind ; to signify, that God did not so much regard the outward pomps and appearances of this vain world, as the inward frame and temper of spirit.

It is indeed no small disparagement to those empty glories, which men are wont so hugely to admire, and it may be a strong inducement to a

SERM.
XXIV.

Gen. xxvi.
4. xii. 3.
xviii. 18.
xxii. 18.
Gal. iii. 8.
Acts iii. 25.
ii. 15.
Isa. xi. 1.
10.
Rom. i. 3.
xv. 2.
Ps. cxxxii.
17.
Rev. v. 5.
xxii. 16.
Amos ix.
11.
Acts xv. 16.
Luke i. 32.
Jer. xxxiii.
15. xxiii. 5.
Matt. ii. 5.
15, 21, 23.

SERM. moderate esteem of them, if we consider it, that
XXIV.

God did not choose for the mother of his Son, and Saviour of mankind, a visibly great princess, or any to appearance honourable, splendid, or wealthy personage; but her that was espoused to a mechanic artificer, her that was only rich in grace, and decked
1 Pet. iii. 4. with interior endowments; *adorned* (after the garb which St. Peter recommendeth to women) *with the hidden man of the heart, in the incorruptible purity of a meek and quiet spirit, which in the sight of God is of great price.* This is the reflection which she herself did make upon the matter; for
Luke i. 51. *this her soul did magnify God, because he had regarded the low estate of his handmaiden;—he had shewed strength with his arm, he had scattered the proud in the imagination of their hearts; he had put down the mighty from their seat, and had exalted the humble and meek; he had filled the hungry with good things, and the rich he had sent empty away.* This sheweth the extreme folly of contemning the poor, to whom commonly God expresseth so special regard, who are capable of so high favours, who have so glorious consorts of their state.

Such a person did the Son of God choose to bear himself, to bear duty unto, to confer that special favour and eminent honour upon; an honour, among all exterior honours the highest that ever was vouchsafed to any of human kind, or indeed to any mere creature.

I say of exterior honours; for spiritual advantages our Lord himself doth teach us in our esteem to prefer above this great privilege; they being *toto genere*, superior, and placing us in a nobler relation

to him than this; *Whosoever*, saith he, *shall do the will of my Father that is in heaven, the same is my brother, and sister, and mother*; the same in a more excellent manner and sublime degree is allied, is endeared to me, than he can be upon the score of any carnal kindred: the conformity to him in our mind and affections doth render us nearer to him than any cognation of blood; the having him formed in our hearts is more considerable, than the bearing of him in the womb.

Indeed, the mother of our Lord herself, although as such she was *κεχαριτωμένη*, *especially favoured and graced*, and *blessed among women*; although upon that account *all nations must esteem and call her blessed*; although worthily she did in that respect acknowledge, that *God had done magnificent and mighty things for her*; yet really, in just esteem, to have Christ born in her soul, to have participated of his divine grace and presence in her heart, the Holy Ghost's having produced a spiritual birth of holy dispositions in her, was a nobler honour and a truer happiness than that; *neither would it*, as St. Chrysostom saith, *have been anywise profitable to her, if she had not been virtuous, to bear Christ in her womb, or to bring forth that admirable birth*; this our Saviour plainly declared, whenas a good woman, transported by the ravishing excellency of his discourse, did cry out, * *Blessed is the womb that bare thee*, he thence took occasion to say, *Yea rather, blessed are they that hear the word of God and keep it*.

We might also here further observe, that our Saviour upon other good accounts willingly did choose so mean a parentage; namely,

SERM.
XXIV.

Matt. xii.

50.

Luke i. 28,
48, 49.

Οὐδὲ τὸ κρυ-
φῆσαι τὸν
Χριστὸν, καὶ
τὸν θαυμα-
στὸν ἐκείνου
τόπον ταπειν-
ῆς ἡλικίας
ἰσχυρῆς
ἀρετῆς
οὐκ εὐσε-
βείας.

Chrys. in
Matt. xii.
50.

* Luke xi.
27.

SERM.
XXIV.

That he thence might have readier opportunity to undergo and taste the greatest inconveniences and hardships incident to our nature, thereby more fully meriting and suffering for us.

That he might have occasion to exemplify the most difficult virtues and duties, (humility, meekness, patience, contentedness,) shewing us how we should virtuously comport with the lowest state; how we should cheerfully sustain wants, labours, pains, and disgraces; how we should contentedly be destitute of all the glories, riches, and pleasures of this world.

That also the divine power and glory might appear more conspicuously through his worldly state of impotency and baseness.

That he might insinuate the nature of his kingdom not to consist in secular pomp and puissance, but in spiritual power over the hearts of men.

That he might discover wherein our happiness doth consist; how little any thing, which is high in vulgar esteem of men, is an ingredient thereof: and what is the true grandeur of a man; not his outward garb and retinue, but his inward virtue and goodness.

Finally, this relation of the blessed Virgin to our Lord, as it should beget a precious esteem and honourable memory of her, (for let that mouth be cursed which will not call her blessed, let the name of him be branded with everlasting reproach of folly, who will not prefer her in dignity before any queen or empress,) so it should not serve to breed in us fond opinions, or to ground superstitious practices in regard to her, as it hath happened to do among

divers sorts of Christians; especially among the adherents to Rome. For, .SERM
XXIV.

They (out of a wanton mind, but in effect profanely and sacrilegiously) have attributed to her divers swelling and vain names, divers scandalously unsavoury, some hideously blasphemous, titles and elogies, as alluding to, so intrenching upon, the incommunicable prerogatives of God Almighty and of our blessed Saviour; such as *the Queen of Heaven, the Health of the World, the Mother of Mercies, the Spouse of God, Our Lady*, (as if, beside our *unus Dominus*, there were *una Domina* in the church, forgotten by St. Paul,) with the like.

Eph. iv. 5.
1 Cor. viii.

They ascribe to her the most sublime attributes⁶ of God, together with his most peculiar actions of providence and protection over us, yea of redemption itself.

They yield acts of religious veneration (prayer and praise) to her, and those in a very high manner and strain; professing not only *to serve her* religiously, (which the holy scripture chargeth us to do in regard to God and him only,) but *ὑπερδουλεύειν*, to do more than serve her, or to serve her with exceeding devotion.

Who commonly do at the end of their works join, *Praise be to God and to the blessed Virgin*; as if she were to share with God in the glory and gratitude due for blessing or success upon our performances. Laus Deo et
B. Virgini.

All this they do, without any plain reason, any plausible authority, any ancient example, yea manifestly enough against the best reason, the commands of God, the doctrine and practice of the primitive church, all which do conspire in appropriating reli-

SERM. gious adoration to God alone; neither the holy
 XXIV. scripture nor the first Fathers excepting the blessed
 Virgin from the general rule, or taking notice of her
 as an object of our worship, but nipping the first
 essays of such a superstition in the Collyridians.

Such groundless and foolish conceits, such dangerous and impious practices, we should carefully beware; the which, as they much derogate from God's honour, and prejudice his service, and thwart his commands, so they indeed do rather greatly discredit, injure, and abuse the blessed Virgin, (making her name accessory to such enormous scandals,) than they do bring any honour, or do any right to her.

And I doubt not, but, εἴ τις αἰσθῆσις, if she from her seat of bliss doth behold these perverse services, or absurd flatteries of her, she with holy regret and disdain doth distaste, loathe, disdain, and reject them; with a *Non nobis Domine*, Psal. 115. *Not unto us, O Lord*; and with the angel in the Apocalypse, "Ὁρα μὴ, *See thou do it not*.

Rev. xix.
 10. xxii. 9.
 Acts x. 26.
 xiv. 14.

Whose greater honour it was, in truth, to be a meek and humble servant, than to be the mother of her Lord and Saviour; it is the chief and truest honour we can do her, to esteem her great modesty and humility, to imitate her piety and grace, after her pattern conscientiously to reverence and obey her Son; unto whom therefore let us with hearty thankfulness render all glory and praise. *Amen.*

Suffered under Pontius Pilate.

SERMON XXV.

1 Cor. i. 23.

*But we preach Christ * crucified.*

THE doctrine of the gospel is called † *the word of the cross*; that is, a report concerning our Lord's crucifixion, together with the declaration of the ends, effects, and uses of it; this being a special and main point therein, whereto all the rest are closely allied, and whereon the whole method of our salvation dependeth; a point, which (as St. Paul in this and in several other places doth acquaint us) of all others did find the hardest entertainment among all sorts of people, to whom it was addressed; few auditors being disposed to swallow it, or able to digest it. The Jews were much offended, that one who suffered by their hands in so vile and wretched a manner should be propounded to them as their *Messias* and *King*; the same who, according to their opinions and hopes, (grounded on their ancient prophecies plausibly interpreted, and on their constant traditions,) was destined to restore them from their afflicted condition, and to rear them into a high state of prosperity. The pagans took it for an extravagantly foolish conceit, that a person of so mean a quality and so miserable a fortune, should be such

* Who was crucified.

(τὸν ἑσταυρωμένον.)

† Λόγος τοῦ σταυροῦ.

1 Cor. i. 18.

Celsus, Orig. lib. ii. p. 83, &c.

lib. i. p. 368.

Porphyrius. Aug. de Civ. D. x.

28. Lucian. Jul. apud

Cyrill. vi. p. 194.

Tryphon. apud Just.

(p. 317.)

SERM. as was told them, *the Son of God*, and *Lord of all*
 XXV. *things*, the author of happiness, and the object of
 highest adoration to all men; very absurd and abominable this proposition did generally seem to the carnal and worldly prejudices of men, who little could understand, and less would consider the sublime design thereof; but to those who (being endued with a meek heart, and enlightened by divine grace) did rightly apprehend and duly weigh it, it did afford great satisfaction and comfort; it had on them a most effectual and beneficial influence; proving indeed unto them *the power of God to salvation*; as raising in them strong hopes of salvation, and engaging them in a practice conducive thereto. Upon this point therefore our Lord's ambassadors, the holy apostles, in their preaching chiefly did insist, declaring the great ends and excellent fruits of our blessed Saviour's crucifixion; according to that of St. Paul,
 1 Cor. i. 18. *I determine to know nothing among you save*
 Rom. i. 16. *Christ, and him crucified.*

Tryphon
 the Jew, in
 Justin Mar-
 tyr, doth
 confess,
 that Christ,
 according
 to the pro-
 phesies of
 holy scrip-
 ture, was
 to suffer;
 but it did
 offend him
 that he
 should suf-

It is therefore questionless a most profitable, and ever (especially now, when our Lord's passion is by the church solemnly commemorated) very seasonable subject of our meditation; apt to excite good thoughts, good affections, and good resolutions in us; and as such, I mean now to recommend and apply it; endeavouring to assist your meditation by suggesting some remarkable particulars concerning it; and in my discourse I shall not so much generally consider the death and passion of our Lord, as the particular manner and kind thereof, by crucifixion; the which we may contemplate, as qualified with divers notable adjuncts; namely, 1. As a suffering in appearance criminal. 2. As most bitter

and painful. 3. As most ignominious and shameful. SERM. 4. As agreeable and advantageous to the intents of XXV. his passion. 5. As compleatory of ancient presignifications and predictions. 6. As apt to excite devotion in us, and to enforce on us the practice of our duty.^{317.}

I. Let us consider it as a suffering in appearance criminal; or a seeming execution of justice upon our Lord, as a malefactor; *He was*, as the prophet foretold, *numbered among the transgressors*; and, *God*, saith St. Paul, *made him sin for us, who knew no sin*; that is, God ordered him to be dealt with as an exceedingly sinful or criminous person, who in himself was perfectly innocent, and void of the least tendency to any fault: so in effect it was, that he was impeached of the highest crimes, not only as a violator of the divine law, in breaking the sabbath, in keeping bad company, and holding an over-free conversation; but as an impostor, deluding and seducing the people; as a blasphemer, assuming to himself the properties and prerogatives of God; as a seditious and rebellious person, *perverting the nation*, forbidding the payments of tribute to Cæsar, usurping royal authority, and pretending to be *Christ a King*; in general, as a *κακοποιός*, a malefactor, or one guilty of notable crimes; so his prosecutors (in the Gospel) did affirm; *If*, said they to Pilate, *he were not a malefactor, we should not have delivered him up unto thee*: as such he was represented and arraigned; and that, although by a sentence wrested from the judge against his conscience, by the malicious importunity of his accusers, he was condemned, and in pretence suffered as such, is clear, and admitted by all.

SERM.
XXV.

Now whereas any death or passion of our Lord (as being in itself infinitely valuable, and most precious in the sight of God) might have been sufficient toward the accomplishing the general designs of his passion, the expiation of our guilt, the appeasement of God's wrath, the satisfaction of divine justice; it might be inquired, why God should so expose him, and why he should choose to suffer under this odious and ugly character: to satisfy this demand, and that we may the more admire the wisdom and goodness of God in this great dispensation, divers reasons may be assigned, which are intimated in holy scripture, or bear a conformity to its doctrine, why it was so ordered. For,

1. As our Saviour freely did undertake a life of greatest meanness and hardship, so upon the like accounts he might be pleased to undergo a death, of all most bitter and uncomfortable: there is nothing to man's nature (especially to honest and ingenuous nature, wherein natural modesty is not extinct) more abominable than such a death: God for good purposes hath planted in our constitution a lively sense of disgrace; and of all disgraces that which proceedeth from an imputation of heinous crimes is most disgustful and pungent; and being conscious of our innocence, doth increase the smart; and to reflect upon ourselves dying under it, or leaving the world with an indelible stain upon our name and memory, is yet more grievous; even to languish by degrees, enduring the torments of a long, however sharp disease, would, to any ingenuous person, be far more eligible, than in this manner (of being reputed and treated as a villain) to find a quick and easy despatch; some touch of which resentment we may

ceive breaking forth in our Lord, and somewhat SERM.
man's nature discovering itself in that question; XXV.

ye come out as against a thief, with swords and Luke xxii.
ives? He did, it seems, as a man, loathe to be pro-^{52.}
Mutt. xxvi.
uted as a thief; yet he willingly chose it; as he^{55.}

proposely did embrace other the worst of distasteful
ings belonging to our nature, and incident to that
vly condition, into which he did put himself, (not
ly being made in the likeness of man, but taking Phil. ii. 7.

form of a servant;) to endure want, and to fare
rdly; to be slighted, envied, hated, scorned, and
roached through the whole course of his life.
d he died in any other way, he had not been so
nplete a sufferer, nor had tasted the worst of
at men can and do endure; there had been a
nfort in seeming innocent, which had impaired

perfection of his undertaking. Often was he in John v. 18.
nger of death, both from the close machinations,^{viii. 37, 40,}
59. vii. 1,
d from the open violences of those who maligned^{19, 25. x.}
32, 39.

n; but he industriously declined a death so easy,
d so honourable, if I may so speak; it not being
disgraceful to fall by private malice, or by sudden
e, as by the solemn and deliberate proceeding of
sons in public authority and great credit.

This kind of death he did foresee, and plainly
h satisfaction did aim at; he (as we have it
ated in the Gospels) did shew his disciples, that
was incumbent on him (by God's appointment,

l his own choice) *ὅτι δεῖ αὐτὸν πολλὰ παθεῖν, that he* Matt. xvi.
ght to suffer many things; to be reprobated by^{21.}
Luke ix. 22.

chief priests, elders, and scribes; to be vilified Mark ix. 12.
Λατρεῖαν
σθῆναι, ἵξου-
δινεῖσθαι.

them; to be condemned, and delivered up to the
ntiles, εἰς τὸ ἐμπαῖξαι, to be mocked, and scourg-
and crucified; as a most flagitious slave.

SERM.
XXV.

Thus would our Saviour, in conformity to all the rest of his voluntary afflictions, and for a consummation of them, not only suffer in his body by sore bruises and wounds, in his soul by the bitterest sorrows and agonies ; but in his name also and reputation by the foulest scandals ; undergoing as well all the infamy, as the infirmity which did belong unto us, or could befall us ; thus meaning by all means to express his charity, and exercise his compassion toward us ; thus advancing his merit, and yielding the utmost satisfaction to justice in our behalf. Again,

2. Death passing on him as a malefactor by public judgment, did best suit to the nature of his undertaking, was most congruous to his design in suffering, did most aptly represent what he was doing, and imply the reason of his performance. We all were guilty in a most high degree ; we deserved an exemplary condemnation ; the sharpest pain, together with the greatest shame, was due to us, for our unworthy offending our most great and our most good Lord and Maker ; he did undertake in our stead to bear all this, and fully to satisfy for us ; he therefore underwent the like judgment and punishment, being reputed, being termed, being treated as we should have been, in quality of a notorious malefactor, as we in truth are. What we really had acted in dishonouring and usurping upon God, in disordering and troubling the world, in deceiving and perverting others, (by our negligent mistakes and our presumptuous miscarriages ; by our evil practices and contagious examples,) that was imputed to him, and avenged on him ; *All we like sheep have gone astray ; we have turned every one to his own way, and the Lord hath laid upon him the iniqui-*

ties of us all; he therefore did not only sustain an SERM. XXV. equivalent punishment, but in a sort did bear an equal blame with us before God and man. Further,

3. Seeing it was determined that our Lord should die for us, and that not in a natural but violent manner, so as perfectly to satisfy God's justice, to vindicate his honour, and to evidence his indignation against our sins; it was most fit that he should perform it in that way, wherein God's right is most nearly concerned, and his providence most discernible; wherein it should be most apparent that God did exact and inflict punishment on him, that he did yield unto it, and submissively undergo it. *All judgment*, as Moses said in his charge, *is God's*; Deut. i. 2 Chron. xix. 6. or is administered in his name, by authority derived from him; all magistrates being his officers and instruments, by whom he governeth and ordereth the world, his kingdom; whence that which is done in way of formal judgment by persons in authority, God himself may be supposed in a more special and immediate manner to execute it, as being done by his commission, in his stead, on his behalf; with his peculiar superintendence and guidance: it was therefore in our Saviour a signal act of submission to God's authority and justice, becoming the person which he sustained, of our proxy and redeemer, to undergo such a judgment, and such a punishment; whereby he received a doom, as it were, from God's own mouth, uttered by his ministers; and bare the stroke of justice from God's hand, represented by his instruments; wherefore very seasonably and pertinently did he reply to Pilate, avowing his authority under God in those words, *Thou hadst no power*. Κατ' ἐμὴν. John xix. 11.

SERM. *over me, (or against me,) except it were given thee*
XXV. *from above*; implying, it was in regard to that originally supreme authority of God his Father, and to his particular appointment upon that occasion, that our Saviour did then freely subject himself to those inferior and subordinate powers, as to the proper ministers of divine justice; had he suffered in any other way, by any private malice or passion of men, God's special providence in that case had been less visible, and Christ's obedience not so remarkable; and if he must die by public hands, it must be as a criminal, under a pretence of guilt and demerit; there must be a formal process, how full soever of mockery and outrage; there must be testimonies produced, however false and groundless; there must be a sentence pronounced, although most partial and corrupt; for no man is persecuted by authority without some colour of desert; otherwise it would cease to be public authority, and become private violence; the prosecutor then would put off the face of a magistrate, and appear as a murderer, or a thief.

4. In fine, our Saviour perhaps in no other way, with such advantage, could have displayed all kinds of virtue and goodness, to the honour of God, and the furtherance of our benefit, as in this: the judgment-hall, with all the passages leading him thither, and from thence to execution, attended on by guards of soldiers, among the crowds and clamours of the people, were as so many theatres, on which he had opportune convenience visibly, in the eye of the world, to act divers parts of sublimest virtue; to express his insuperable constancy in attesting truth and maintaining a good conscience, his meekness in

calmly bearing the greatest wrongs, his patience in SERM.
contentedly enduring the saddest adversities; his XXV.
entire resignation to the will and providence of God;
his peaceable submission to the law and power of
man; his admirable charity in pitying, in excusing,
in obliging those, by his good wishes and earnest
prayers for their pardon, who in a manner so inju-
rious, so despiteful, so cruel, did persecute him; yea
in willingly suffering all this for their salvation: all
these excellent virtues and graces, by the matter
being thus ordered, were in a degree most eminent,
and in a manner very conspicuous, demonstrated to
the praise of God's name, and the advancement of
his truth; for the settlement of our faith and hope;
for an instruction and encouragement of good prac-
tice to us. Upon such considerations it might be
expedient, that he should suffer in this kind as a
criminal.

Was crucified.

S E R M O N XXVI.

1 Cor. i. 23.

But we preach Christ crucified.

SERM. **IT** is added in the Creed, under Pontius Pilate;
XXVI. ἐπὶ Ποντίου Πιλάτου; in which words the preposition ἐπὶ may either denote the circumstance of time, when our Saviour's passion did happen; in the time of Pontius Pilate's government, or presidency over Judæa; so the word ἐπὶ is very frequently used: or it may also further imply a respect to that person, as an instrument of our Saviour's passion; so that it might also be rendered, by, or under, Pontius Pilate, as president and judge: thus is the word sometimes used, (as for instance, where in the gospel it is said, ἐὰν ἀκουσθῇ τοῦτο ἐπὶ τοῦ ἡγεμόνος, *if this be heard by the governor*, or, *if it come to the governor's ear*, as it is rendered in our translation.) Neither of these senses were, I suppose, distinctly, but both rather conjunctly intended here; in relation to the evangelical history; the which (as to the main obvious passages) we are here supposed to know, and do profess to believe; neither do I think any thing more of mystery designed here beyond the full and clear determination of our Saviour's person; or the declaration of whom we do believe in by circumstances most apt and suitable to that purpose; the

Matt.
xxviii. 14.

time when, the person under whom, and consequently the place where, and manner how he suffered. However all these circumstances are in themselves considerable, and afford some matter of edification to our faith and practice: let us therefore touch them. SERM.
XXVI.

1. The *time*, in itself most fit, and most agreeable to divine predictions, doth illustrate the wisdom of God in his providence, doth confirm his veracity, his constancy, and his fidelity: for when the fulness of time was come; when the sceptre of legislation and sovereign authority was just departed from Judah; while the Jewish temple did stand, but was shortly to be destroyed; before the Jews were utterly unsettled and dispersed; when the *seventy hebdomades* (of years) were near expiring, the time when the *Messias should be cut off*; when Judaism Dan. ix. 26. was by numerous accession of proselytes diffused over the world, the sacred writings being translated, and legible everywhere; when the world was in the most general peace and deepest calm, consequently men's attention being then more ready, and their minds more capable of instruction and persuasion concerning divine truths; when the most considerable part of the world was united under one empire, (or under two, that of the Romans, and that of the Parthians,) and thence more fit to be incorporated into a spiritual commonwealth, (to communicate in offices of piety, to impart and receive instruction;) when mankind by learning and policy was generally better civilized than ever, more inquisitive after knowledge, and more receptive of truth; when, in short, all things were duly prepared and suited for the great effects designed by God to proceed from

SERM. our Saviour's passion, and other performances, then
XXVI. did he suffer and do what God had in his wisdom and goodness predetermined, presignified, and predicted. I might add, that the time was fit to be set down, as a character apt to confirm the truth of the history; for direction to a fair inquiry and trial concerning it; to exclude all confusion and uncertainty about it.

2. As for the *person* under whom our Lord suffered; if we consider him as a *Roman stranger*, (or *Gentile*,) or as a *governor* and *judge*; or with regard to his personal qualities; or according to his deportment in this affair; something in all these respects may present itself observable by us.

He was an alien from the commonwealth of Israel; so Jews and Gentiles conspired in violence and injury against their common Saviour; that so in type and mystery it might be signified how the sins
 Rom. iii. 19. of all men did jointly bring him to his death; *that every mouth might be stopped, and all the world might become guilty before God.* Neither was it for nothing decreed by God, that the Jews should
 Matt. xx. (as our Saviour foretold) *deliver him up* (τοῖς ἔθνεσιν)
 19. xxvii. to the Gentiles, *to mock, and scourge, and crucify him.*
 18. The Jews out of envy and malice delivered him up, accused and prosecuted him, instigated and importuned against him; the Gentiles, out of ignorance, profaneness, and unjust partiality, condemned and executed him; whereby the ingratitude, iniquity, and impiety of all mankind did in some sort appear, and was aptly represented; and consequently
 Rom. v. 6, 8, 10. his immense goodness is demonstrated, who for so
 1 Pet. iii. 18. impious, unjust, and flagitious a generation, for so malicious enemies, for so cruel persecutors of him-

self, did willingly suffer : them, who so combined in mischief against him, he then designed to conjoin in reconciliation to God, and in mutual peace and charity toward one another ; *reconciling both unto God in one body by the cross, having slain the enmity thereby.* SERM. XXVI.
Eph. ii. 16.
Col. i. 20.

A *stranger* also was proper for the management of this affair, as apt to be a more fair and indifferent judge ; doing what was designed and fit to be done in our Saviour's trial for vindication of his personal innocence, and declaration of the iniquity practised against him.

Again, if we consider Pilate as a governor and judge, (for so he was, Cæsar's procurator, and president of Judæa, ἐπίτροπος, and ἡγεμὼν he is called ;) Matt. xxvii. 2, &c. we therein may discern the wisdom and special providence of God ; punishing our Saviour for us by his own officer in a course of justice ; the loyal obedience of our Saviour submitting both to God and to man, although in a case of plain outrage and highest injustice against himself ; the heinousness of that wicked proceeding, wherein that sacred power committed by God to men, and the venerable name of justice were so abused ; for if ever, then one might have said with the Preacher, *I saw the place of judgment, that wickedness was there ; and the place of righteousness, that iniquity was there.* Eccles. iii. 16.

As for Pilate's personal qualities ; he is by the historians writing near those times reported to have been a man of a harsh and rough temper ; wilful and haughty in spirit ; violent, rapacious, and cruel in his proceedings ; and was therefore a proper instrument of Providence for execution of such a business ; so holy and gracious in God's purpose, so

SERM.
XXVI.

Joseph. Ant.
tiq. xviii. 5.

Mark xv.

15.
Τὸ ἱκανὸν
ποιῆσαι τῷ
ῥαυλῷ.

John xix. 6.
Luke xxiii.
14, &c.

John xix.
12. ἰζητί.

villainous and barbarous according to man's intention; such a person deserved to bear the guilt of a fact so execrably base; was worthy to be employed therein, and ready enough to undergo it: it had not in itself been so plausible that such an act should, nor so credible that it could, proceed from any person otherwise of good disposition, or right intention; but for him it was proper, of him it could not be improbable; who by his former violences (such as upon the complaints of this people did soon after, as Josephus telleth, remove him from his charge) had so incensed the Jews, that he would not stick to gratify them in a matter wherein they so earnestly concerned themselves; and which in semblance (setting aside considerations of justice and honesty, so little material in such a person's regard) so little touched his own interest; in yielding up so poor, so as to outward show inconsiderable a person, as a boon or sacrifice to their importunate rage; *Pilate*, saith St. Mark, *willing to content the people, released Barabbas unto them, and delivered Jesus, when he had scourged him, to be crucified.*

Such an one he was; and yet it is observable, that in comparison to the furious Jews, he behaved himself with some moderation and ingenuity: he was so fair in examination of the case, as, notwithstanding their eager and clamorous prosecution, to discern the right, and to declare our Saviour guiltless: he was so far constant and true to his conscience, as to expostulate with the Jews, and once, twice, a third time, to challenge them, *Why, what evil hath he done?* As often did he discover his inclination and readiness (yea, his will and intention, his earnest desire—) to free the innocent person:

yet had he not the heart or the honesty throughly to resist their importunities ; they were more obstinate in their wicked designs, than he resolute in his good purposes : so partly out of fear to offend them, partly out of favour to oblige them, (those two usual corrupters of right judgment,) he yielded to them, unworthily suffering himself to be overborne by their wicked solicitations, so sacrificing acknowledged innocence to his own private interest and their implacable malice. Thus did the heathen judge behave himself, serving divine Providence, not only in the public and formal condemnation of our Saviour to the punishment due unto us, but in the solemn and serious absolution of him from all blame deserved by himself : in show he condemned our Saviour ; in truth he condemned himself, the corrupt judge ; and the Jews, the malicious accusers : though he took away his life, yet he cleared his reputation ; affording a testimony most valid and convincing of his innocence ; such as was requisite to convince all Jewish slanders and aspersions ; and sufficient to confirm our faith.

3. Furthermore, the name of Pontius Pilate intimateth the *place* of our Saviour's passion ; he being well known to have been governor of Judæa, and to have his tribunal of justice at the mother-city thereof, Jerusalem : at Jerusalem, *that bloody city*, as the prophet calls it, whose character it was to be the *killer of the prophets, and the stoner of them who were sent unto her ; out of which it was* (in a sort) *impossible*, that a prophet should perish ; yet the place of all the world most favoured, and graced by God by special blessings and privileges ; at Jerusalem, his own peculiar seat ; *the city of*

SERM.
XXVI.Luke xxiii.
20.

Acts iii. 13.

Κρίναυτος
ἐκείνου ἀπο-
λύειν.

Ezek. xxii.

2. xxiv. 6.

Luke xiii.

33, 34.
Ps. xlviii. 2.

lxxxvii. 3.

Deut. xii. 5.

Neh. ix. 1.

Ezra vi. 12.

SERM. *God, the city of the great King*, it is styled; the
 XXVI. *which he out of all the tribes of Israel, out of all*
 1 Kings xi. *the people of the earth, had chosen to put his name*
 32. (to place his especial presence) *there; the holy and*
 Matt. iv. 5. *beloved city*; there at his own doors, as it were,
 xxvii. 53. before his own sacred palace, where most especial
 Rev. xx. 9, &c. respect and veneration were due to him, was the
 King of heaven adjudged and executed; by pro-
 curement of his own servants, peculiarly related to
 him, the chief priests and elders of his chosen people,
 persons wholly devoted to his service, and highly dig-
 nified by him; whose office and especial duty it was
 to maintain truth and encourage righteousness, to
 procure, by their instruction and practice, honour to
 God and obedience to his commandments; which
 circumstance considered, as it highly advances the
 goodness of him who willingly suffered there, and by
 such persons, so it much aggravateth man's ingrati-
 tude and iniquity.

I shall now proceed to handle the rest of the par-
 ticulars which I proposed in the beginning of the
 last Discourse.

II. We may consider that his suffering was most
 bitter and painful. We may easily imagine, what
 acerbity of pain must be endured by our Lord, in
 his tender limbs being stretched forth, racked, and
 tentered, and continuing a good time in such a pos-
 ture; by the *piercing his hands and his feet*, parts
 exquisitely sensible, with sharp nails, (so that, as it
 Psal. cv. 18. is said of Joseph, *the iron-entered into his soul*;) by
 O. T. abiding exposed to the injuries of sun scorching,
 wind beating upon, weather searching his grievous
 wounds and sores: such a pain it was, and that no
 stupifying, no transient pain, but a pain very acute,

d withal lingering: for we see that he, and those SERM. XXVI.
 who suffered with him, had both presence of mind Mark xv. 25, 34.
 and time to discourse; even six long hours did he
 continue under such torture, sustaining in each mi-
 nute of them beyond the pangs of an ordinary death.
 It as the case was so hard and sad, so the reason
 whereof was great, and the fruit answerably excel-
 lent; our Saviour did embrace such a passion, that
 being thus ready to endure the most grievous
 parts for us, he might demonstrate the vehemence
 of his love; that he might signify the heinousness
 of our sins, which deserved that from such a Person,
 heavy punishment should be exacted; that he
 might appear to yield a valuable compensation for
 those everlasting tortures which we should have en-
 dured; that he might thoroughly exemplify the
 strictest duties of obedience and patience. Further,
 III. We may consider this sort of punishment, as Quod etiam
 homine li-
 bero quam-
 vis nocente
 videatur in-
 dignum.
 Lact. iv. (p.
 436.)
 most sharp and afflictive, so most vile and shameful;
 being proper to the basest condition of the worst
 men, and *unworthy*, as Lactantius saith, *of a free-
 man, however nocent or guilty*. It was *servile sup-
 plicium*, a punishment never by the Romans, under
 whose law our Lord suffered, legally inflicted upon
 freemen, but only upon slaves, that is, upon people
 scarce regarded as men, having in a sort forfeited
 themselves; and among the Jews likewise,
 at execution which most approached thereto, and
 partly agreed with it, (for they had no so inhuman
 punishment appointed by their law,) hanging up the
 dead bodies of some who had been executed, was
 deemed most infamous and execrable; for *cursed*, Deut. xxi. 23.
 said the Law, *is every one that hangeth upon a* Gal. iii. 16.
tree; cursed, that is, devoted to reproach and male- Τοῦτο γὰρ
 μόνον τῆς τι-
 λιοῦτός ἐστι

SERM. diction ; *accursed of God*, it is in the Hebrew ; that
 XXVI. is, seeming to be deserted by God, or to be exposed
 to affliction by his special order.

Ἰδὼς ὁ πρὸς δὲ
 τὸν λαόν.

Chrys. tom.
 vi. Or. 61.

Indeed, according to course of things, to be raised
 on high, and for continuance of time to be objected
 to the view of all that pass by, in that calamitous
 posture, doth breed ill suspicion, doth provoke cen-
 sure, doth invite contempt, scorn, and obloquy ;
 doth naturally draw forth language of derision, de-
 spite, and detestation, especially from the inconsi-
 derate, rude, and hard-hearted vulgar ; which com-
 monly doth think, speak, deal with men according
 to event and appearance, (*—sequitur fortunam sem-*
 Heb. x. 33. *per et odit damnatos*,) whence θεωρίζεσθαι, *to be*
made a gazing-stock, or object of reproach to the
 multitude, is accounted by the apostle as an aggra-
 vation of the hardships endured by the primitive
 Christians : and thus in the highest degree did it
 happen to our Lord ; for we read that the people
 did in that condition mock, jeer, and revile him ;
 Luke xxiii. ἐξεμυκτήριζον, ἐνέπαιζον, ἐβλασφήμουν, they drew up their
 35, 36. noses, they shot out their lips, they shook their
 Matt. xxvii. heads at him ; they let out their wicked and wanton
 38. tongues against him ; verifying that prediction in
 the Psalm, *I am a reproach of men, and despised*
 Psal. xxii. *of the people ; all they that see me laugh me to*
 6, 7. *scorn ; they shoot out the lip, they shake the head,*
saying, He trusted in the Lord, that he would de-
liver him ; let him deliver him, seeing he delighted
in him : in this case the same persons who formerly
 had admired his glorious works, who had been ra-
 Matt. ix. 33. vished with his excellent discourses, who had fol-
 xxi. 9. xii. lowed and favoured him so earnestly, who had
 23. blessed and magnified him, (for *he*, saith St. Luke,

Luke iv. 15.

did *teach in their synagogues*, δοξαζόμενος ὑπὸ πάντων, SERM. XXVI.
being glorified by all,) even those very men did XXVI.
then behold him with pitiless scorn and despite;
εἰστήκει ὁ λαὸς θεωρῶν, *the people*, saith St. Luke, *stood* Luke xxiii.
gazing upon him, in correspondence to that in the 35.
Psal. xxii. prophet, *They look and stare upon me*; they looked ^{17.}
in a scornful manner, venting contemptuous and
spiteful reproaches, as we see reported in the evan-
gelical histories.

Thus did our Saviour *endure the cross, despising* Heb. xii. 2.
the shame; despising the shame, that is, not simply
disregarding or disesteeming it, as no evil, with a
Stoical haughtiness, or Cynical immodesty; but not
eschewing it, or not valuing it as so great an evil,
that for declining it he would neglect the prosecu-
tion of his great and glorious designs. There is in
man's nature an aversion and abhorrency from
disgraceful abuse, no less strong than are the like
antipathies to pain; whence cruel *mockings and* Heb. xi. 36.
scourgings we find coupled together, as ingredients
of the sore persecutions sustained by God's faithful
martyrs; and generally men will more readily em-
brace, and more contentedly support the latter than
the former; pain not so grievously affecting the
lower sense, as being insolently despised doth grate
on the fancy and wound the mind; for the *wounds* Prov. xviii.
of infamy do, as the Wise Man telleth us, *go down* 8. xii. 18.
into the innermost parts of the belly, piercing the
very hearts of men, and touching the soul to the
quick. We need not therefore doubt, but that our
Saviour (as a man, endued with human passions
and infirmities) was sensible of this natural evil;
and that such indignity did add somewhat of bitter-
ness and loathsomeness to his cup of affliction, espe-

SERM. cially considering that his great charity disposed
 XXVI. him to grieve, observing men to act so very indecently, so unworthily, and so unjustly toward him; yet in consideration of the glory that would thence accrue to God, of the benefit that would redound to

Heb. xii. 2. us, of *the joy that was set before him*, when he
 Isa. liii. 11. *should see of the travail of his soul, and be satisfied*, he did most willingly undertake and gladly

Gal. iii. 13. undergo it: *He became*, as the apostle saith, *a curse for us*, or was exposed to malediction and reviling; he endured *the contradiction* (or obloquy)

Heb. xii. 3. of *sinful men*, he was *despised, rejected, and dis-*
 Isa. liii. 3, 4. *esteemed of men*; he in the common apprehensions of men did seem deserted by God, according to that of the prophet, *We did esteem him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted*; he did himself in a manner seem to concur in that opinion, as by that woful outcry, *Lama sabacthani?* doth appear; so did he become a curse for us, *that*, as the apostle subjoineth, *we might be redeemed from the curse of the Law*, that is, that we might be saved from that exemplary punishment due to our transgressions of the Law; with the displeasure of God appearing therein, and the disgrace before men attending it: he

Phil. ii. 7. chose thus to *make himself of no reputation*, as the apostle speaketh, being contented to be dealt with as a wretched slave and wicked miscreant, that we might be exempted not only from the torment, but also from the ignominy we had deserved; that we, together with our life, and safety, and liberty, might recover even that honour which we had forfeited.

But lest any one should be tempted not sufficiently to value these sufferings of our Lord, as things not so rare, but that other men have tasted

the like; or should be ready to compare them with the sufferings of other virtuous men, as Celsus did with those of Anaxarchus and Epictetus; I shall by the bye interpose somewhat observable concerning them. We may then consider, that not only the infinite excellency of his person, and the perfect innocency of his life, did enhance the price of his sufferings, but some endowments peculiar to him, and some circumstances, did increase their force: he was not only, according to the frame and temper of human nature, sensibly affected with the pain and shame, and all the rest of evils apparently waiting on his passion; as God (when he did insert sense and passion in our nature, ordering objects to affect them) did intend that we should be, and as other men in like outward circumstances would have been, but in many respects beyond that ordinary rate; no man, we may suppose, could have felt such grief from them as he did; no man did ever feel any thing comparable to what he did endure; it might be truly applied to him, *Behold, and see if there be any sorrow like to my sorrow, which is done unto me, wherewith the Lord hath afflicted me in the day of his fierce anger*, as that extraordinary sweating great lumps of blood may argue; as the terms expressing his affliction do intimate; for, in regard to present evils, *his soul* is said to have been *exceedingly sorrowful unto death*; he is said, ἀδημονεῖν, to be in great anguish and anxiety; and to be in an agony, or pang; in respect to mischiefs which he foresaw coming on, he is said, ταράττεσθαι τῷ πνεύματι, to be disordered, or *disturbed in spirit*, and ἐκθαμβεῖσθαι, to be amazed, or dismayed at them; to such excessive height of passion did the sense of in-

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Lam. i. 22.
Luke xxii.

44.

Περίλυτος
ἐως θανάτου.

Matt. xxvi.
37, 38.

Luke xxii.
44.

ἐν ἀγωνίᾳ
γίνεσθαι.

John xiii.
21. xii. 27.

Mark xiv.
33.

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cumbent evils and the prospect of impendent disasters, the apprehension of his own case and reflection upon our state, raise him : and no wonder, that such a burden, the weight of all the sins (the numberless heinous sins and abominations) which he did appropriate to himself, that ever have been, or shall be committed by mankind, lying upon his shoulders, he should feel it heavy, he should seem to crouch and groan under it ; *Innumerable evils*, said he in the mystical Psalm, *have compassed me about : mine iniquities have taken hold upon me, so that I am not able to look up : they are more than the hairs of my head : therefore my heart faileth me.* God's indignation so dreadfully flaming out against sin might well astonish and terrify him ; to stand before the mouth of hell belching out fire and brimstone upon him, to lie down in the hottest furnace of divine vengeance, to undertake with his heart-blood to quench all the wrath of heaven and all the flames of hell, (as he did in regard to those who will not rekindle them to themselves,) might well in the heart of a man beget unconceivable and unexpressible pressures of anguish ; when such a Father (so infinitely good and kind to him, and whom he so dearly loved) did hide his face from him, did angrily frown on him, how could he otherwise than be sorely troubled ? It is not strange, that so hearty a love, so tender a pity contemplating our sinfulness, and sustaining our wretchedness, should be deeply affected thereby ; any one of those persons, who fondly do pretend to, or vainly glory in, a stupid apathy, or in a stubborn contempt of the evils incident to our nature and state, would in such a case have been utterly dejected ; the most resolved philo-

sopher would have been dashed into confusion at the sight, would have been crushed to despair under the sense of those calamities which assaulted our Lord. With the greatness of the causes, the goodness of his constitution might also conspire to augment his suffering; for surely as his complexion was most pure and delicate, his spirit most vivid and apprehensive, his affections most pliant and tractable; so accordingly should the impressions upon him be most sensible; and consequently the pains which he felt both in soul and body most sharp and afflictive. That we in like cases are not alike affected, that we do not tremble at the apprehensions of God's displeasure, that we are not affrighted with the sense of our sins, that we do not with sad horror resent our own danger or our misery, doth arise from that we have very glimmering and faint conceptions of those things, or that they do not in so clear and lively a manner strike our mind and fancy; (not appearing in their true nature and proper shape, so heinous and so hideous, as they really in themselves and in their consequences are,) or because that we have but weak persuasions about them; or because we do but slightly consider them; or from that our hearts are hard and callous, our affections cold and dull, so that nothing of this nature (nothing beside gross material affairs) can easily move or melt them; or for that we have in us small love to God, and little regard to our own true welfare; for that briefly in respect to spiritual matters we are neither so wise, so serious, so sober, nor so good and ingenuous in any reasonable measure, as we ought to be: but our Saviour in all these respects was otherwise disposed; he most evidently discerned the

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wrath of God, the grievousness of sin, the wretchedness of man most truly, most fully, most strongly represented to his imagination and spirit; he most firmly believed, yea most certainly knew all that God's law had declared about them; he thoroughly did consider and weigh them; his heart was most soft and sensible; his affections were most quick, and easily excited by their due objects; he was full of dutiful love to God his Father, and most ardently desirous of our good, bearing a more than fraternal good-will toward us; whence it is not marvellous, that as a man, as a transcendently good man, he was so vehemently affected by those occurrences; that his imagination was so troubled, and his affections so mightily stirred by them; so that he thence truly did suffer in a manner and to a degree unconceivable; according to that ejaculation in the Greek liturgies, *Διὰ τῶν ἀγνώστων σου παθημάτων ἑλέησον ἡμᾶς, Χριστέ.* *By thy unknown sufferings, O Christ, have mercy on us.* But further,

IV. We may consider, that this way of suffering had in it some particular advantages conducing to the accomplishment of our Lord's principal design.

Its being very notorious, and lasting a competent time, were good advantages; for if he had been privately made away, or suddenly despatched, no such great notice would have been taken of it, nor would the matter of fact itself have been so fully proved to the confirmation of our faith, and conviction of infidelity; nor had that his excellent deportment under such bitter affliction, (his most divine patience, meekness, and charity,) so illustriously shone forth: wherefore (to prevent all exceptions, and excuses of unbelief, and for other collateral good purposes) di-

vine Providence did so manage the business, that as SERM. XXVI. the course of his life, so also the manner of his death should be most conspicuous and remarkable; *These things*, as St. Paul told king Agrippa, *were not done in a corner*; and, *I*, said our Lord himself, John xviii. 20. *spake freely to the world, and in secret have I done nothing*; so were the proceedings of his life, not close or clancular, but frank and open; not presently hushed up, but carried on leisurely in the face of the world; that men might have the advantage to observe and examine them. And as he lived, so he died most publicly and visibly, the world being witness of his death, and so prepared to believe his resurrection, and thence ready to embrace his doctrine; according to what he did himself foretell, John xii. 32. *being lifted up from the earth shall draw all men unto me*; he drew all men by so remarkable a death to take notice of it, he drew some from the wondrous consequences of it to believe on him: and, John xiii. 14. *As*, saith he again, *Moses did exalt the serpent in the wilderness, so must the Son of man be exalted*: the elevation of that mysterious serpent upon a pole did render it visible, and attracted the eyes of people toward it; whereby God's power invisibly accompanying that sacramental performance, they were cured of those mortiferous stings which they had received; so our Lord being mounted on the cross, allured the eyes of men to behold, and their hearts to close with him; whereby the heavenly virtue of God's Spirit cooperating, they become saved from those destructive sins, which by the Devil's serpentine instigations they had incurred.

Another advantage of this kind of suffering was, that by it the nature of that kingdom, which he in-

SERM. tended to erect, was evidently signified ; that it was
XXVI. not such as the carnal people did expect, an external, earthly, temporal kingdom, consisting in domination over the bodies and estates of men, dignified by outward wealth and splendour, managed by worldly power and policy, promoted by force and terror of arms, affording to men the advantages of outward safety, peace, and prosperity ; but a kingdom purely spiritual, heavenly, eternal ; consisting in the government of men's hearts and spirits ; adorned with endowments of piety and virtue, administered by the grace and guidance of God's holy Spirit, maintained and propagated by meek instruction, by virtuous example, by hearty devotion and humble patience ; rewarding its loyal subjects with spiritual joys and consolations here, with endless rest and bliss hereafter ; no other kingdom could he be presumed to design, who submitted to this dolorous and disgraceful way of suffering ; no other exploits could he pretend to achieve by expiring on a cross, no other way could he govern who gave himself up to be managed by the will of his enemies ; no other benefits would that forlorn case allow him to dispense ; so that well might he then assert, *My kingdom is not of this world*, when he was going in this signal manner to demonstrate that great truth. It was a touchstone to prove men's disposition, and to discriminate the ingenuous, well-disposed, humble, and sober persons, who would entertain our Lord's heavenly doctrine with acceptance, notwithstanding these disadvantages, *not being offended in him*, from those perverse, vain, proud, profane people, who being scandalized at his adversity would reject him.

John xviii.
36.

Another advantage was this, that by it God's spe-

al providence was discovered, and his glory illus-
 trated in the propagation of the gospel; for how
 could it be, that a person of so low parentage, of
 so mean garb, of so poor condition, who underwent
 so woful and despicable a kind of death, falling
 under the pride and spite of his adversaries, should
 so easily gain so general an opinion in the world,
 among the best, the wisest, the greatest persons,
 of being *the Lord of life and glory*: how, I say,
 could it be, that such a miracle should be effected
 without God's aid and special concurrence? that
 Herod, who from a long reign in a flourishing state,
 with prosperous success in his undertakings, got the
 name of Great; or that Vespasian; who triumphantly
 did ascend the imperial throne, should either of them
 by a few admirers of worldly vanity, seriously or
 by flattery, be deemed the Messiah, is not so very
 strange: but that one who so miserably was tram-
 pled on, and treated as a wretched caitif, should in-
 stantly conquer innumerable hearts, and from such
 depth of extreme adversity should attain the sub-
 mest pitch of glory; that *the stone which the build-
 ers with so much scorn did refuse, should become
 the head stone of the corner, this* (with good assur-
 ance we may say) *is the Lord's doing, and it is
 marvellous in our eyes.* It may well be so, and
 hereby *the excellency* of divine power and wisdom
 was much glorified; by so impotent, so implausible
 and improbable means, accomplishing so great ef-
 fects; subduing the world to his obedience, not by
 the active valour of an illustrious hero, but through
 the patient submission of a poor, abused, and op-
 pressed person; restoring mankind to life by the
 death of a crucified Saviour.

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Chrys. tom.
vi. Or. 61.

Psal. cxviii.
22, 23.

2 Cor. iv. 7.
1 Cor. i. 27.

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Again, this kind of suffering to the devout fathers did seem many ways significant, or full of instructive and admonitive emblems; being a rich and large field for a devout fancy to range with affectionate meditation.

Extendit in
passione
manus
suas, &c.
Lact. iv. p.
437.

His posture on the cross might represent unto us that large and comprehensive charity which he bare in his heart toward us, stretching forth his arms of kindness, pity, and mercy, with them, as it were, to embrace the world, receiving all mankind under the wings of his gracious protection.

It might exhibit him as earnestly wooing and entreating us to return unto God, accepting the reconciliation which he then was purchasing, and did then offer to us; *I have spread out my hands all the day unto a rebellious people*, said God of old, doing it then mediately and figurately by his prophets, but he did so now immediately and properly by himself; the cross being as a pulpit, from which our Lord *God blessed for ever* did himself in person earnestly preach the overtures of grace, did exhort to repentance, did tender the remission of sin, with action most pathological and affecting.

Levit. ix. 22.
2 Chron. iv.

1.

Chrys. tom.

vi. Or. 82.

Quod un-

quam sacri-

ficiū sa-

cratus fuit,

quam quod

verus pou-

tifex altari

crucis per

immolationem

sue

carnis im-

posuit? Leo

M. Ep. 83.

His ascent to the cross might set forth his discharging that high office of universal High Priest for all ages and all people; the cross being an altar, whereon he did offer up his own flesh, and pour forth his blood, as a pure and perfect sacrifice, propitiating God and expiating the sins of mankind.

His elevation thither may suggest to our thoughts that submission to God's will, suffering for truth and righteousness, the exercises of humility and patience, are conjoined with exaltation, do qualify for, and in effect procure true preferment; so that the lower we

stoop in humility, the higher we shall rise in favour SERM. XXVI. with God, the nearer we shall approach to heaven, the surer we shall be of God's blessing, according to that aphorism of our Lord, *Whosoever humbleth himself shall be exalted.* Luke xviii. 4. The cross was a throne, Matt. xxiii. 12. whereon humility and patience did sit in high state 1 Pet. v. 5. and glorious majesty, advanced above all worldly James iv. 10. pride and insolence; it was a great step, a sure ascent unto the celestial throne of dignity superlative; for because our Lord *was obedient unto death, even the death of the cross, therefore did God far exalt⁹ him above all dignity and power in heaven and earth,* as St. Paul doth teach us. Phil. ii. 8,

O the fallacy of human sense! O the vanity of carnal judgment! nothing ever was more auspicious or more happy than this event, which had so dismal an aspect, and provoked so contemptuous scorn in some, so grievous pity in others: the Devil thought he had done bravely, when he had by his suggestions brought the Son of God into this case; the world supposed itself highly prosperous in its attempts against him; but O how blind and foolish is malice, which then doth most hurt itself, when it triumpheth in the mischief which it doeth to others! How impotent is wickedness, which is never more thoroughly ruined than by its own greatest success! for by thus striving to debase our Lord, they most highly did advance him; by thus crossing our salvation, they most effectually did promote it.

Further, looking up to the cross may admonish us how our salvation is acquired, and whence it doth proceed; not by casting our eyes downward, not from any thing that lieth upon earth; but *our help cometh from above,* our salvation is attained by look-

SERM. ing upwards ; we must lift up our eyes to behold
 XXVI. our Saviour procuring it, we must raise up our hearts
 to derive it from him.

Συμμερφού-
 μνοι τῇ θά-
 νάτῃ αὐτοῦ.
 Phil. iii. 10.
 Rom. vi. 5.
 Gal. ii. 20.
 v. 24.
 Col. iii. 5.
 Rom. viii.
 13.

Our Lord's crucifixion may also intimate to us, how
 our flesh must be dealt with, and to what usage we
 must submit it ; for we must not only imitate our
 Saviour in his holy life, but in some manner should
 resemble him in his ghastly death ; being, as St. Paul
 speaketh, *conformable to his death, and planted to-
 gether with him in the likeness of it ; mortifying
 our earthly members, crucifying the flesh with its
 affections and lusts ; having our old man crucified
 together with Christ, that the body of sin may be
 destroyed.* His death may fitly shadow our death
 to sin, his grievous pain the bitterness of our re-
 pentance, wherein our souls should be pierced with
 sharp compunction, as his sacred flesh was torn with
 nails ; his shame that confusion of mind, which re-
 gard to our offences should produce within us.

Passio ipsa
 per se acer-
 ba et amara
 specimen
 nobis futu-
 rorum tor-
 mentorum
 dabat,
 quam in
 hoc seculo
 morantibus
 virtus ipsa
 proponit—
 Lact. lib. iv.
 * 1 Thess.
 iii. 3.
 † Rom. viii.
 29.
 Acts xiv. 22.
 2 Tim. iii.
 12.

Reflecting on him we may also discern our state
 here ; wherein, if we will be truly and thoroughly
 virtuous, we must be exposed to envy and hatred, to
 censure and obloquy, to contempt and scorn, to af-
 fliction and hardship ; every good man must hang
 on some cross ; *εἰς τοῦτο κείμεθα, * We are, saith St.
 Paul, appointed to this ; it is our lot and portion
 assigned to us by divine immutable decree ; being
 † predestinated to a conformity with this image of
 God's Son : We must, as he did, by many tribula-
 tions enter into the kingdom of God : All that will
 live godlily in Christ Jesus shall certainly suffer
 persecution, one way or other partaking of his cross.*

Divers such analogies and resemblances devout
 meditation might extract from this matter, suggest-

ing practical truths, and exciting good affections in us. SERM.
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V. We may (for the confirmation of our faith, and begetting in us a due adoration of the divine wisdom and providence) observe the correspondency of this our Saviour's manner of suffering to the ancient prophecies foretelling, and the typical representations foreshewing it.

That most famous, clear, and complete prophecy concerning the passion, doth express him suffering as a malefactor, (*he was reckoned among the transgressors,*) suffering in a manner very painful, (*he was wounded for our transgressions, and bruised for our iniquities,*) suffering in a most ignominious way,) he was *despised, and rejected of men, as a man of sorrow, and acquainted with grief,*) which circumstances could scarce so punctually agree to any other kind of suffering, or punishment then used, as to this.

In the 22d Psalm, the royal prophet describeth an afflicted and forlorn condition, such as by no passages in the story concerning him doth in the full extent, and according to the literal signification of his words, appear suitable to his person, which therefore is more properly to be accommodated unto the Messiah, whom he did represent; and in that description, among other passages agreeing to our Lord, these words do occur; *Thou hast brought me into the dust of death; for dogs have compassed me, the assembly of the wicked have enclosed me; they pierced my hands and my feet;* which words how patly and livelily do they set out our Saviour's being nailed to the cross, and treated in that cruel and in that shameful way by his malicious adversaries!

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Zech. x. 20.
John xix.
37.

In the prophet Zechariah, God speaking in his own name, *They* (namely some of the Jews, being sensible of what they had acted, and penitently affected for it, they) *shall look upon me, whom they have pierced*; which words need no violence to wring from them the right meaning, no comment to explain them, in accommodation to that matter, to which the Evangelists do apply them, and to which they are so literally congruous.

Gen. xxii.
Rom. ix. 8.
James ii. 21.
Heb. xi. 17.

The same was also fitly prefigured by apposite types. Isaac, the immediate *heir of the promise*, in whom the faithful seed was called and conveyed down, and so a most apt type of our Saviour, being devoted and offered up to God, did himself bear the wood by which he was to be offered: so did our Saviour, the promised seed, in *whom all nations should be blessed*, himself bear the cross by which he was to suffer, and to be offered up a sacrifice to God.

Tert. c. Jud.
cap. 10.

Those who were dangerously bitten by fiery serpents, were, by looking upon a brasen serpent set upon a pole, preserved in life, which (according to most authentic exposition) did represent the salvation which should proceed from our beholding and believing on him lifted up upon the cross to us, who had been mortally struck and stung by that old serpent's poisonous insinuations.

1 Pet. i. 19.

The paschal lamb was a most congruous emblem of *Christ our passover*, (that most innocent and meek, most unblemished and spotless Lamb, slain for the sins of the world.) It was to be killed by the whole assembly of the congregation of Israel, its blood was to be dashed on the side-posts and cross-beams of every door; its body was not to be eaten

raw, nor sodden with water, but roasted whole, and SERM. XXVI.
 dressed upon a spit ; nor were any of its bones to be Exod. xii. 5, 6, 9, 46.
 broken : which circumstances, with so exact caution
 and care prescribed, how they justly suit and fitly
 adumbrate this manner of our Saviour's passion, I
 need not otherwise than by the bare mention of
 them declare ; every one easily being able to com-
 pare and adapt them.

VI. Lastly, the consideration of our Lord's thus
 suffering is applicable to our practice ; being most
 apt to instruct and affect us ; admonishing us of
 our duty, and exciting us to a conscionable perform-
 ance thereof : no contemplation indeed is more fruit-
 ful, or more efficacious toward the sanctification of
 our hearts and lives, than this of the cross ; for what
 good affection may not the meditation on it kindle ?
 what virtue may it not breed and cherish in us ?

1. How can it otherwise than inflame our heart
 with love toward our Lord, to think what acerbity
 of pain, what indignity of shame he did willingly
 undertake, and gladly endure for us ? No imagina-John xv. 13.
 tion can devise a greater expression of charity and Eph. v. 2,
 friendship ; and if love naturally is productive of 25.
 love, if friendship meriteth a correspondence in kind-Gal. ii. 20.
 ness, what effect should the consideration of such Rev. i. 5.
 ineffable love, of so incomparable friendship, have Eph. iii. 19.
 upon us ?

2. How can a reflection on this case otherwise
 than work hearty gratitude in us ? Suppose any
 person for our sake (that he might rescue us from
 the greatest mischiefs, and purchase for us the high-
 est benefits) willingly should deprive himself of all
 his estate, his honour, his ease and pleasure, should
 expose himself to extremest hazards, should endure

SERM. the sorest pains and most disgraceful ignominies,
XXVI. should prostitute his life, and lose it in the most hideous manner: should we not then be monstrously ingrateful, if we did not most deeply resent such kindness; if upon all occasions we did not express our thankfulness for it; if we did not ever readily yield all the acknowledgment and all the requital we were able? The case in regard to our Lord is the same in kind, but in degree, whatever we can suppose, doth infinitely fall below the performances for us of him who stooped from the top of heaven, who laid aside the felicity and majesty of God, for the sorrows and infamies of the cross, that he might redeem us from the torments of hell, and procure to us the joys of heaven; so that our obligation to gratitude is unexpressibly great, and we are extremely unworthy, if the effects in our heart and life be not answerable.

Rom. viii.
 32.

3. What surer ground of faith in God, or stronger encouragement of hope can there be, than is hence afforded to us? for *if God spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for our sake* to the suffering of these bitter pains and contumelies; how can we in any case distrust his bounty, or despair of his mercy? *How, as St. Paul argueth, shall he not also with him freely give us all things?* What higher favour could God express, what lower condescension could he shew; how more plainly or surely could he testify his willingness and his delight to do us good, than by ordering the Son of his love to undergo these most grievous things for us? How consequently could there be laid a stronger foundation of our hope and entire confidence in God?

4. What greater engagement (in general) can there

be to obedience, than to consider how readily and SERM. XXVI.
cheerfully our Lord did submit to the will of God, in bearing the most heavy yoke that could be im-
posed on him, in drinking the most bitter cup that
could be tempered for him : how that he *did hum-* Phil. ii. 8.
ble himself, being obedient unto death, even the
death of the cross? how dearly he did purchase
his property in us, and dominion over us ?

What detestation of our sins must the serious
consideration of this event produce in us ! of our
sins, that brought such tortures and such reproaches
on our blessed Redeemer. Judas the wretch who
betrayed him, the Jewish priests who did accuse
and prosecute him, the wicked rout which abused
and insulted over him, those cruel hands that
smote him, those pitiless hearts that scorned him,
those poisonous tongues that mocked and reviled
him, all those, who anywise were instruments or
abettors of his affliction, how do we loathe them !
how do we detest and curse their memories ! But
how much greater reason have we to abominate our
sins, which were the principal causes of all that
woful tragedy ! *He was delivered for our offences* ; Rom. iv. 25.
they were indeed the traitors, which by the hands 2 Cor. v. 21.
of Judas delivered him up ; *He that knew no sin*
was made sin for us ; that is, was accused, was
condemned, was executed as a sinner for us : it was
therefore we who by our sins did impeach him ; the
spiteful priests were but our advocates ; we by them
did adjudge and sentence him, Pilate (against his
will and conscience) was but our spokesman ; we by
them did inflict that horrid punishment on him, the
Roman executioners were but our agents therein :
He became a curse for us ; that is, all the mockery, Gal. iii. 13.

SERM. XXVI. derision, and contumely he endured did proceed from us; the silly people were but properties, acting our parts; our sins were they that cried out *Crucifige, (Crucify him, crucify him,)* with clamours more loud and more effectual than did all the Jewish rabble; it was they which by the borrowed throats of that base people did so outrageously persecute him; *He was wounded for our transgressions, and bruised for our iniquities;* it was they which by the hands of the fierce soldiers and of the rude populacy, as by senseless engines, did buffet and scourge him; they by the nails and thorns did pierce his flesh and rend his sacred body: upon them therefore it is most just and fit that we should turn our hatred, that we should discharge our indignation.

5. And what in reason can be more powerful to the breeding in us remorse and penitent sorrow, than reflection upon such horrible effects proceeding from our sins? how can we but earnestly grieve, when we consider ourselves by them to have been the betrayers, the slanderers, the murderers of a person so innocent and lovely, of one so great and glorious, of God's dear Son, and the Lord of all things, of our own best friend, and most kind Saviour!

(Matt.
xxvii. 45,
51.
Luke xxiii.
44.)

6. If ingenuity will not operate so far, and hereby melt us into contrition, yet surely this consideration must needs produce some fear within us; for can we at least otherwise than tremble to think upon the heinous guilt of our sins, upon the fierceness of God's wrath against them, upon the severity of divine judgment for them, all so manifestly discovered, all so livelily set forth in this dismal spectacle? If the view of an ordinary execution is apt to beget in

us some terror, some dread of the law, some reverence toward authority, what awful impressions should this singular example of divine justice work upon us! How greatly we should be moved thereby, we may learn from the deportment of the most inanimate creatures; the whole world did seem affected thereat with horror; the frame of things was disturbed, all nature did feel a kind of compassion and compunction for it; the sun (as out of aversion or shame) did hide his face, leaving the earth covered for three hours with mournful blackness; the bowels of the earth did yearn and quake; the rocks were rent; the vail of the temple was torn quite through; graves did open, and the bodies did wake; and can we (who are most concerned) be more stupid than the earth, more obdurate than rocks, more drowsy than buried carcasses, the most insensible and immoveable things in nature?

7. How also can it but hugely deter us from wilful commission of sin, to consider that by it we do, as the apostle teacheth, *recrucify the Son of God*, ^{ἀνασταυρώσιν.} *and again expose him to open shame*; bringing upon the stage, and acting over all that direful tragedy; renewing (as to our guilt) all that pain and that disgrace to him; that we thereby, as he telleth us, do *trample upon the Son of God, and prize the blood* ^{Heb. vi. 6.} *of the covenant* (that most sacred and precious blood, so freely shed for the demonstration of God's mercy, and the ratification of his gracious intentions toward us) *as a common thing*, of no special worth or consideration with us; despising all his so kind and painful endeavours for our salvation; defeating his most gracious purposes and earnest desires for our welfare; rendering all his so bitter and loathsome

SERM. XXVI. sufferings, in regard to us, altogether vain and fruitless, yea indeed hurtful and pernicious; for if the cross do not save us from our sins, it will sorely aggravate their guilt, and augment their punishment, bringing a severer condemnation and a sadder ruin on us.

8. It may also yield great consolation and joy to us, to contemplate our Lord upon the cross, expressing his immense goodness and charity toward us; transacting our redemption; expiating our sins, and sustaining our miseries; combating and defeating all the adversaries of our salvation.

Is it not comfortable and pleasant to behold him there standing erect, not only as a resolute sufferer, but as a glorious conqueror; where *having spoiled principalities and powers, he made a solemn show, triumphing over them?* No conqueror loftily seated in his triumphal chariot did ever yield a spectacle so gallant or magnificent; no tree was ever adorned with trophies so pompous or precious. To the external view and carnal sense of men, our Lord was then exposed to scorn and shame; but to spiritual and true discerning, all his and our enemies did there hang up, as objects of contempt, quite overthrown and undone: there the Devil, *ὁ ἰσχυρὸς*, that *strong and sturdy one*, did hang, bound and fettered, disarmed and spoiled, utterly baffled and confounded. There death itself hung gasping, with its sting plucked out, and all its terrors quelled; his death having prevented ours, and purchased immortality for us. There the world, with its vain pomps, its counterfeit beauties, its fondly admired excellencies, its bewitching pleasures, did hang up, all disparaged and defaced, as it appeared to St. Paul; *God forbid,*

Matt. xii.

29.

Luke xi. 22.

Heb. ii. 14.

1 Cor. xv.

54.

2 Tim. i. 10.

said he, *that I should glory, save in the cross of Christ, by which the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world.* There our sins, those sins which, as St. Peter saith, our Saviour *did carry up unto the gibbet*, did hang, as marks of his victorious prowess, as objects of our horror and hatred, as malefactors by him *condemned in the flesh*. There that manifold enmity (enmity between God and man, between one man and another, between man and his own self, or conscience) did hang, *abolished in his flesh*, and *slain upon the cross; by the blood whereof he made peace, and reconciled all things in heaven and earth.* The blood of the cross was the cement, joining the parts of the world. There, together with all our enemies, did hang all those causes of woe and misery to us, those yokes of bondage, those instruments of vexation, those hard laws, which did so much burden and encumber men, did set them at such distance and variance, did so far subject them to guilt and condemnation; all *that bond of ordinances*, inducing our obligation to so grievous forfeitures and penalties, was *nailed to the cross*, being cancelled and expunged by our Saviour's performances there.

9. This consideration is a strong inducement to the practice of charity toward our neighbour: for can we forbear to love those, toward whom our Lord bore such tender affection, for whom he did sustain so woful tortures and indignities? Shall we not in obedience to his most urgent commands, in conformity to his most notable example, in grateful return to him for his benefits, who thus did suffer for us, discharge this most sweet and easy duty toward his beloved friends? Shall we not comport with an infirmity, or bear a petty neglect, or forgive

SERM. a small injury to our brother, whenas our Lord did
 XXVI. bear a cross for us, and from us, obtaining pardon
 for our numberless most heinous affronts and of-
 fences against God? It is St. Paul's reasoning; *We*
 Rom. xv. 1, *that are strong ought to bear the infirmities of the*
 3. *weak—for even Christ pleased not himself; but, as*
it is written, The reproaches of them that reproach-
ed thee fell on me. Can we hear our Lord say,
 John xv. *This is my command, That ye love one another,*
 12. xiii. 35. *as I have loved you; and, Hereby shall all men*
 Eph. v. 2. *know that ye are my disciples, if ye love one an-*
other: can we hear St. Paul exhorting, Walk in love,
as Christ also hath loved us, and hath given him-
self for us, an offering and a sacrifice to God for
a sweet-smelling savour: can we consider St John's
 1 John iv. *arguing, Beloved, if God so loved us, then ought*
 11. iii. 16. *we also to love one another: Hereby we perceive*
the love of God, because he laid down his life for
us: wherefore we ought to lay down our lives for
the brethren? can, I say, we consider such dis-
 courses, without being disposed to comply with them
 1 Pet. iv. 1. *for the sake of our crucified Saviour; all whose life*
and death were nothing else but one continual re-
commendation and enforcement of this duty?

10. Furthermore, What can be more operative
 than this consideration toward breeding a disregard
 of this world, with all its deceitful vanities and mis-
 chievous delights; toward reconciling our minds to
 the worst condition it can bring us into; toward
 supporting our hearts under the heaviest pressures
 of affliction it can lay upon us? How can we refuse,
 in submission to God's pleasure, to bear contentedly
 a slight grievance, when he, as he gladly did, bore
 a cross, infinitely more grievous to carnal will and

sense than any that can befall us? Can we expect, SERM. XXVI.
 can we affect, can we desire great prosperity, when-
 as the Son of God, our Lord and Master, did only
 taste such adversity? Who can admire those splen-
 did trifles which our Lord did never regard in his
 life, which at his death did only serve to mock
 and abuse him? Who can relish those sordid plea-
 sures, of which he living did not vouchsafe to taste,
 and the contraries whereof he dying chose to feel
 in all extremity? Who will dare to vilify, to dis-
 dain, to reject a state of sorrow or disgrace, which
 he by a voluntary susception of it hath so dignified
 and graced; by which we resemble and become con- Rom. viii.
 formable to him; by which we concur and partake ^{17.}
 with him; yea, by which we may promote, and in
 a sort complete, his designs; *filling up*, as St. Paul Phil. iii. 10.
 speaketh, *that which is behind of the afflictions of* Rev. i. 9.
Christ in our flesh? Who now can much prefer, 1 Pet. iv. 13.
 being esteemed, applauded, approved or favoured by Col. i. 24.
 men, before infamy, reproach, derision, or persecu- Αντανα- πληροῦν τὰ ὑστερήματα.
 tion from them, especially when these do follow con-
 scientious adherence to righteousness? Who can Cogitemus crucem
 be very ambitious of worldly honour or repute, co- ejus, et di-
 vetous of wealth, or greedy of pleasure, who observ- vitias lu-
 eth the only Son of God choosing rather to hang tam puta-
 upon a cross than to sit upon a throne; inviting bimus.
 the clamours of spite and scorn, rather than accla- Hier. Ep. ii.
 mations of blessing and praise; divesting himself of ad Nepot.
 all secular pomp, plenty, conveniences and solaces; Quis bea-
 embracing the garb of a slave and the repute of a tam vitam
 malefactor, before the dignity and respect of a prince, esse arbi-
 which were his due, and which he easily could have tretur in
 obtained? Can we imagine it a very happy thing to iis, quæ
 be high and prosperous in this world, to swim here contem-
 nenda esse
 docuit
 filius Dei?
 Aug. de Ag.
 Ch. c. 11.

SERM. in affluence and pleasure ; can we take it for a mi-
 XXVI. sery to be mean and low, to conflict with any wants
 or straits here, seeing the fountain of all happiness
 did himself condescend to so forlorn a state, and was
 pleased to become so deep a sufferer? If with the eyes
 of our mind we do behold our Lord hanging naked
 upon a gibbet, besmeared with his own blood, groan-
 ing under extreme anguish of pain, encompassed
 with all sorts of disgraceful abuses, *yielding*, as the
 prophet foretold of him, *his back to the smiters, and*
his cheeks to them who plucked off the hair, hid-
ing not his face from shame and spitting ; will not
 the imagination of such a sight dim the lustre of all
 earthly grandeurs and beauties, damp the sense of
 all carnal delights and satisfactions, quash all the
 glee which we can find in any wild frolics or riotous
 merriments ?

11. It is surely a great commendation of afflic-
 tions, and a strong consolation under them, to pon-
 der well this point ; for if hardship was to our Lord
 a school of duty, *he*, as the apostle saith, *learning*
 Heb. v. 8. *obedience from what he suffered* ; if it was to him
 an instrument of perfection, as the same apostle im-
 Heb. ii. 10. plieth, when he saith, that *it became God to perfect*
the Captain of our salvation by suffering ; if it was
 a means of procuring the Divine favour even to him,
 John x. 17. as those words import, *Therefore the Father loveth*
me, because I lay down my life ; if it was to him a
 Luke xxiv. 26. step unto glory, according to that saying, *Was not*
Christ to suffer, and so to enter into his glory ? yea,
 if it was a ground of conferring on him that sub-
 limest pitch of dignity above all creatures, as we are
 Phil. ii. 9. taught ; for *because*, saith St. Paul, *he was obedient*
to death, even the death of the cross, therefore did

God exalt him, and gave him a name above every name; and, We see Jesus, saith the Apostle to the Hebrews, for the suffering of death crowned with glory and honour; and, Worthy, crieth out the heavenly society in the Revelations, is the Lamb that was slain, and who redeemed us to God by his blood, to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing; if affliction did minister such advantages to him; and if by our conformity to him in undergoing it with like submission, humility, and patience, it may afford the like to us, what reason can there be, that we should anywise be discomposed, discouraged, or disconsolate under it? Much more reason surely there is, that with St. Paul and all the holy apostles we should boast, rejoice, and exult in our tribulations; far more cause we have with them to esteem it a favour, a privilege, and an ornament to us, than to be discontented or displeased therewith. To do thus is a duty incumbent on us as Christians; for he, saith our Master, that doth not take up his cross, and follow me, is not worthy of me: He that doth not carry his cross, and go after me, cannot be my disciple: he that doth not willingly take the cross, when it is presented to him by God's hand; he that doth not contentedly bear it, when it is by Providence imposed on him, is nowise worthy of the honour to wait on Christ; he is not capable to be reckoned among the disciples of our heavenly Master; he is not worthy of Christ, as not having the courage, the constancy, the sincerity required of a Christian; of one pretending to such great benefits, such high privileges, such excellent rewards, as Christ our Lord and Saviour doth propose; he cannot be Christ's dis-

SERM.
XXVI.

Heb. ii. 9.

Rev. v. 12.

(9.)

Rom. v. 3. -

Col. i. 24.

Matt. v. 12.

Luk. vi. 23.

Phil. i. 29.

Acts v. 41.

James i. 2.

Heb. x. 34.

1 Pet. i. 7.

Heb. xii.—

1 Cor. i. 4.

Luke xiv.

27. ix. 23.

Matt. x. 38.

xvi. 24.

SERM. ciple, shewing such incapacity to learn those needful
XXVI. lessons of humility and patience dictated by him;

Matt. xi. 29. declaring such an indisposition to transcribe those
ὑπογραμμών
ἰσαληψά-
ων.

1 Pet. ii. 21. self-resignation, so fairly set him by the instruction

1 Pet. iv. 1. and example of Christ: *Forasmuch then as Christ
hath suffered for us in the flesh, arm yourselves*

1 Pet. ii. 21. *likewise with the same mind; and; Christ suffered
for us, leaving us an example, that we should follow
his steps,* saith St. Peter.

Naz. Or.
38. ad fin.

12. The willing susception and the cheerful sus-
tenance of the cross is indeed the express condition,
and the proper character of our Christianity; in sig-
nification whereof it hath been from immemorial
time a constant usage to mark those who enter into
it with the figure of the cross. The cross, as the in-
strument by which our peace with God was wrought,
as the stage whereon our Lord did act the last part
of his miraculous obedience, consummating our re-
demption; as the field wherein the *Captain of our
salvation* did achieve his noble victory, and erect his
glorious trophies over all the enemies thereof, was
well assumed to be the badge of our profession, the
ensign of our spiritual warfare, the pledge of our
constant adherence to our crucified Saviour; in re-
lation to whom our chief hope is grounded, our

Τὸ τρέσαιον
τοῦ σταυροῦ.
Apost.
Const. viii.
12.

Ἐμοὶ μὴ γλ-
οριάζετε παυχᾶ-
σθαι.

Gal. vi. 14.
1 Cor. i. 23.

great joy and sole glory doth consist; for, *God for-
bid,* saith St. Paul, *that I should glory, save in the
cross of Christ.*

Let it be *to the Jews a scandal*, or offensive to
their fancy, prepossessed with expectations of a Mes-
sias flourishing in secular pomp and prosperity; let
it be *folly to the Greeks*, or seem absurd to men im-
bued (puffed up, corrupted) with fleshly notions and

maxims of worldly craft, disposing men to value no- SERM.
 thing which is not grateful to present sense or fancy; XXVI.
 that God should put his own most beloved Son into
 so very sad and despicable a condition; that salva-
 tion from death and misery should be procured by so
 miserable a death; that eternal joy, glory, and hap- Orig. in
 piness should issue from these fountains of extreme Cels. lib. ii.
 sorrow and shame; that a person in external sem- p. 79.
 blance devoted to so opprobrious and slavish usage
 should be the Lord and Redeemer of mankind, the
 King and Judge of all the world; let this doctrine,
 I say, be scandalous and distasteful to some persons
 tainted with prejudice; let it appear strange and in-
 credible to others blinded with self-conceit; let all
 the proud, all the profane, all the inconsiderate part
 of mankind slight and reject it; yet to us it must
 appear grateful and joyous; to us it is πιστός λόγος, a 1 Tim. i. 15.
faithful (and credible) *proposition, worthy of all* 2 Tim. ii.
acceptation, that Jesus Christ came into the world 11.
thus to save sinners: to us, who discern by a clearer
 light, and are endued with a purer sense, kindled
 by the divine Spirit, from whence, with comfortable
 satisfaction of mind, we may apprehend and taste
 that God could not in a higher measure, or a fitter
 manner, illustrate his glorious attributes of goodness
 and justice, his infinite grace and mercy toward his
 poor creatures, his holy displeasure against wicked-
 ness, his impartial severity in punishing iniquity and
 impiety, or in vindicating his own honour and au-
 thority, than by thus ordering his Son to suffer for
 us; that also true virtue and goodness could not
 otherwise be taught, be exemplified, be commended Grot. de
 and impressed with greater advantage. Ver. iv. 12.

SERM.
XXVI.

We might allege the suffrages of eminent philosophers, persons esteemed most wise by improvement of natural light, who have declared, that perfection of virtue can hardly be produced or expressed otherwise than by undergoing most sharp afflictions and tortures^a; and that God therefore, as a wise Father, is wont with them to exercise those whom he best loveth: we might also produce instances of divers persons, even among Pagans^b, most famous and honourable in the judgment of all posterity for their singular virtue and wisdom, who were tried in this furnace, and thereby shone most brightly; their suffering, by the iniquity and ingratitude, by the envy and malignity of their times, in their reputation, liberty, and life; their undergoing foul slanders, infamous punishments, and ignominious deaths, more than any other practices of their life, recommending them to the regard and admiration of future ages^c; although none of them, as our Lord, did suffer of choice, or upon design to advance the interests of goodness, but upon constraint, and irresistible force put on them; none of them did suffer in a manner so signal, with circumstances so rare, and with events so wonderful; yet suffering as they did was their

^a Plat. de Rep. ii. p. 594.

^b Magnum exemplum, nisi mala fortuna non invenit. *Sen. de Prov.* iii. Plut. de Stoic. contr. p. 1931.

^c Socrates, Phocion, Thraceas, Aristides, &c. Vid. *Ælian.* Var. xi. 9. 2. 43.

^d Cicuta Socratem magnum fecit, &c. *Sen. Ep.* 13, et 67, et 104. (*Sen. Ep.* 81. *Ep.* 113.)

Rutilii innocentia ac virtus lateret, nisi accepisset injuriam; dum violatur effulsit. *Sen. Ep.* 79.

chief glory ; whence it seemeth, that even according to the sincerest dictates of common wisdom this dispensation was not so unaccountable ; nor ought the Greeks, in consistency with themselves, and in respect to their own admired philosophy, to have *deemed our doctrine* of the cross *foolish*, or unreasonable. SERM.
XXVI.

To conclude ; since thereby a charity and humanity so unparalleled, (far transcending theirs who have been celebrated for devoting their lives out of love to their country, or kindness to their friends,) a meekness so incomparable, a resolution so invincible, a patience so heroical, were manifested for the instruction and direction of men ; since never were the vices and the vanities of the world (so prejudicial to the welfare of mankind) so remarkably disparaged ; since never any suffering could pretend to so worthy and beneficial effects, the expiation of the whole world's sin, and reconciliation of mankind to God, such as no performance beside, nor any other sacrifice did ever aim to procure ; since, in fine, no virtue had ever so glorious rewards, as sovereign dignity to him that exercised it, and eternal happiness to those who imitate it ; since, I say, there be such excellent uses and fruits of the cross borne by our blessed Saviour, we can have no reason to be offended at it, or ashamed of it ; but with all reason heartily we should approve and humbly adore, as well the deep wisdom of God, as all other his glorious attributes, illustriously displayed therein : to whom therefore, as is most due, let us devoutly render all thanks, all praise, and glory.

And, *Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his blood, and hath made us kings* Rev. i. 5, 6.

SERM. *and priests unto God and his Father ; to him be*
XXVI. *glory and dominion for ever and ever.*

Rev. v. 13. *Blessing, and honour, and glory, and power, be*
unto him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto
the Lamb for ever and ever. Amen.

Dead and Buried.

S E R M O N XXVII.

1 COR. XV. 3.

For I delivered unto you first of all, that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins, according to the scriptures.

ST. Paul, meaning in this chapter to maintain a **SERM. XXVII.** very fundamental point of our religion (*the resurrection of the dead*) against some infidels or heretics, who among the Corinthians, his scholars in the faith, did oppose it; doth, in order to the proof of his assertion, and refutation of that pernicious error, premise those doctrines, which he having received both from relation of the other apostles, and by immediate revelation from God himself, had delivered unto them, ἐν πρώτοις, *in the first place*, or among the prime things; that is, as most eminent and important points of Christian doctrine; the truth whereof consequently (standing upon the same foundations with Christianity itself, upon Divine revelation and apostolical testimony) could nowise be disputed of, or doubted, by any good Christian. Of which doctrines (the collection of which he styleth *the Gospel*; that Gospel, by embracing and retaining which they *were*, he saith, *to be saved*) the first is that in our text, concerning the *death of our Lord*, undergone by him for our salvation: which point, as of all others in our religion it is of peculiar

SERM. consequence, so it much concerneth us both firmly
 XXVII. to believe it and well to understand it; for it is by
 Rom. iii. *faith in his blood* that we are *justified*, and by
 25. 1 Cor. ii. 2. *knowing Christ crucified* we shall be chiefly edified;
 Rom. i. 16. *the word* imparting this knowledge being *the power*
 Philip. iii. *of God to salvation*. It therefore I mean now, by
 10. God's assistance, to explain and apply; the which
 I shall do generally and absolutely; without any
 particular accommodation of my Discourse to the
 words of this text; yet so as to comprehend all the
 particulars observable in them. The death of our
 Lord then is my subject, and about it I shall con-
 sider, 1. Its nature, or wherein it did consist. 2.
 Some peculiar adjuncts and respects thereof, which
 commend it to our regard, and render it considerable
 to us. 3. The principles and (impressive and meri-
 torious) causes thereof. 4. The ends which it aimed
 at; together with the fruits and effects of it. 5. Some
 practical influences, which the consideration thereof
 may and should have upon us.

1. As for the nature of it we must affirm, and
 believe assuredly, that it was a true and proper
 death; in kind not different from that death, to the
 which all we mortal creatures are by the law and
 condition of our nature subject, and which we must
 Ps. lxxxix. all sometime undergo; for, *What man is he that*
 48. *liveth and shall not see death; that shall deliver*
his soul from the hand of the grave? that death,
 which is signified by cessation from vital operations;
 (of all motions natural or voluntary, of all sense and
 knowledge, appetite and passion;) *that death*, which
 is caused by violent disunion, or dislocation, by dis-
 tempering, or however indisposing the parts, hu-
 mours, spirits of the body, so that the soul can no

longer in them and by them continue to exercise SERM. XXVII. those functions, for which its conjunction thereto was intended, and cannot therefore fitly reside therein^a; *that death*, which is supposed to consist in the dissolution of that vital band, whatever it be, whereby the soul is linked and united to the body; or in that which is thereupon consequent, the separation, department, and absence of the soul from the body; each of that couple, upon their divorce, returning home to their original principles, as it were; the body *to the earth from whence it was taken*, and *the spirit unto God who gave it*. Such causes antecedent are specified in the story; such signs following are plainly implied, such a state is expressed in the very terms, whereby our death is commonly signified: the same extremity of anguish, the same dilaceration of parts, the same effusion of blood, which would destroy our vital temper, quench our natural heat, stop our animal motions, exhaust our spirits, and force out our breath, did work upon him; necessarily producing the like effects on him, as who had assumed the common imperfections and infirmities of our nature; in regard to which violences inflicted upon him he is said, ἀποκτείνεσθαι, *to be killed or slain*; διαχειρίζεσθαι, *to be despatched*; ἀναιρεῖσθαι, *to be made away*; ἀπολέσθαι, *to perish*, or *be destroyed*; ἐξολοθρεύεσθαι, *to be cut off*, as it is in Daniel; σφάττεσθαι, *to be slaughtered*; θύεσθαι, *to be sacrificed*; which words do all of them fully import a real and proper death to have ensued upon those violent usages toward him.

Gen. iii. 19.
Eccles. xii.
7.
Ps. cīv. 29.

Acts iii. 15.
viii. 33.
Dan. ix. 26.
Isa. liii. 8.
John xviii.
4. xi. 50.
Rev. v. 9.

And by the ordinary signs of death, apparent to

^a ——— Ἐπεὶ κε πρῶτα λίπη λεύκ' ὁστέα θυμός·

Ψυχὴ δ', ἥντ' ὄνειρος, ἀποκταμένη πεπόνηται. Hom. Od. Λ. 220.

SERM. sense, the soldiers judged him dead ; and therefore,
XXVII. ὡς εἶδον αὐτὸν ἤδη τεθνηκότα, *seeing him already dead,*

John xix.
33.

they forbear to break his legs : by the same all the world was satisfied thereof ; both his spiteful enemies, that stood with delight, waiting for this utmost success of their malicious endeavours to destroy him ; and his loving friends, who with compassionate respect attended upon him through the course of his suffering ; and those who were ready to perform their last offices of kindness, in procuring a decent interment of his body.

Mark xiv.
41.

Luke xxiii.

27.
John xix.

25.

His transition also, and abiding in this state, are expressed by terms declaring the propriety of his death, and its agreement with our death. St. Mark

Mark xv.

37.
Matt. xxvii.

50.

John xix.

30.

telleth us, that ἐξέπνευσε, *animam efflavit*, he expired, breathed out his soul, or his last breath ; St. Matthew, ἀφῆκε τὸ πνεῦμα, *animam egit*, he let go his spirit, or *gave up the ghost* ; St. John, παρέδωκε τὸ πνεῦμα, *he delivered up his spirit* into God's hand ; the which St. Luke expresseth done with a formal resignation ; *Father*, said he, *into thy hands I commend* (or I depose) *my spirit* ; he doth also himself frequently express his dying by *laying down his life*, and *bestowing it as a ransom*, which sheweth him really to have parted with it.

Luke xxiii.

46.

Παρεστῆ-

μαι.

John xv. 13.

x. 15, 18.

xiii. 37.

1 John iii. 6.

His death also (as ours is wont to be denoted by like phrases) is termed ἔξοδος, *excessus e vivis*, a going out of life, or from the society of men ; (for Moses and Elias are said to tell, τὴν ἔξοδον αὐτοῦ, *his decease, which he should accomplish at Jerusalem* ;)

Luke ix. 31.

2 Pet. i. 15.

Ἀφίξις.

Acts xx. 29.

John xiii. 1.

and μετάβασις, a passing over, or translation from this into another world ; (*When*, saith St. John, *Jesus knew that his time was come, ἵνα μεταβῇ, that he should depart from this world.*) His death also

is enigmatically described by the *destruction* or **SERM.**
molishment of his bodily temple, answerable to **XXVII.**
ose circumlocutions concerning our ordinary death; **John ii. 19.**
e dissolution of our earthly house of tabernacle, **Matt. xxvi.**
61.
transitory abode, in St. Paul; the ἀπόθεσις τοῦ σκη- **2 Cor. v. 1.**
ματοῦ, laying down, or putting off our tabernacle, **2 Pet. i. 14.**
St. Peter.

It were also not hard to shew, how all other
rases and circumlocutions, by which human death
expressed, either in holy scripture or in usual lan-
uage, or among philosophers and more accurate
eakers, are either expressly applied, or by conse-
equence are plainly applicable to the death of our Sa-
our; such, for instance, as these in scripture; ἀνά- **1 Tim. iv.**
τις, being resolved into our principles, or the re- **6.**
rning of them thither whence they came; ἀπόλυσις **Phil. i. 23.**
being freed, licensed, or dismissed hence; ἐκδημία **Luke ii. 29.**
τοῦ σώματος, a going, or abode abroad; a peregrina- **2 Cor. v. 8.**
on, or absentment *from the body*; an ἑκδυσις, put-
ing off, or being divested of the body; and ἀφανί- **Acts xiii.**
ς, disappearance, or cessation in appearance to **36.**
; a *going hence, and not being seen; a falling* **Gen. xxv. 8.**
sleep, resting from our labours, sleeping with **xlix. 33, &c.**
our fathers, being added, and gathered to our fa- **Psal. xxxix.**
thers; being taken, or cut off out of the land of **13. lii. 5.**
the living; going down into the pit; lying down, **xxviii. 1.**
sting, sleeping in the dust; making our bed in **cxliii. 7.**
weakness: these and the like phrases occurring in **lxxxviii. 4.**
ipture (which might be paralleled out of vulgar **Jer. xi. 19.**
eech, and out of learned discourses) describing **Isa. xxxviii.**
her the entrance into, or the abiding in the state **18. xxvi. 19.**
that death, to which all men are obnoxious, might **Ezek. xxvi.**
sily be shewed applicable to the death of our Sa- **20.**
our. His resurrection doth imply the reality of **Dan. xii. 12.**
Job vii. 21.
xvii. 16.
xx. 11. xxi.
26. xvii. 13.

SERM. his death ; for otherwise it had not been miraculous,
 XXVII. it had not been a pledge of our resurrection. But I will not further needlessly insist upon explicating, or confirming a point so clear, and never misunderstood, or questioned, except by some wild and presumptuous heretics.

Our Saviour's death then was a true, real, and proper death, suitable to that frail, passible, and mortal nature, which he vouchsafed to undergo for
 Rom. viii. 3. us ; to the condition of *sinful flesh, in the likeness whereof he did appear* ; severing his soul and body, and remitting them to their original sources ; his passion was indeed *ultimum supplicium*, an extreme capital punishment, the highest, in the last result, which in this world either the fiercest injustice or
 Matt. x. 28. the severest justice could inflict : for, *to kill the body*
 Luke xii. 4. is, as our Lord himself taught, the utmost limit of all human power and malice ; the most and worst that man can do ; they have not *περισσότερόν τι*, any thing beyond that which they can attempt upon us ; and so far did they proceed with our Lord. Such was the nature of his death ; such indeed as was requisite for the accomplishment of the ends and effects designed thereby.

2. Let us now consider those peculiar adjuncts and respects of our Lord's death, (together with his whole passion, whereof his death was the chief part and final completion,) the which do commend it to our regard, and amplify the worth thereof ; such are, 1. Its being a result of God's eternal resolution and decree. 2. Its being a matter of free consent and compact between God the Father and his only Son. 3. Its being anciently prefigured and predicted. 4. Its being executed by God's hand and providence guiding and

governing it; and by man's action concurring. 5. Its SERM. XXVII.
being the death of a person so holy and innocent, so
high and excellent, of God's Son, of God the Son.

1. It was a result of God's eternal counsel and decree; it was no casual event, no expedient suddenly devised, or slipt from providence, but a well-aid design, from all eternity contrived by divine wisdom, resolved upon by divine goodness. As God did (by the incomprehensible perfection of his nature) from thence foresee our lapse and misery, so he did as soon determine our remedy and means of salvation. As the whole of that mysterious dispensation concerning Christ, so especially did this main part thereof proceed *κατὰ πρόθεσιν τῶν αἰώνων*, *according to an eternal purpose*, as St. Paul speak-^{Ephes. iii. 11.}
ing; for our Saviour was a *Lamb slain* (in designation irrevocable slain) *from the foundation of the world*; as it is said in the Revelation: and, *We*,^{Rev. xiii. 8.}
with St. Peter, *were redeemed by the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot*, *προεγνωσμένου μὲν*, *foreordained indeed before the foundation of the world*: and our Saviour went, as he telleth us himself, to suffer, *κατὰ τὸ ὄρι- Luke xxii. μένον*, *according to what was determined*: and, *It*^{Acts ii. 23.}
was by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, saith St. Peter, *that he was delivered up into those wicked hands that slew him*; nor did the conspiracy of *Herod and Pilate, with the nation and people of the Jews*, effect any thing about it, beyond *ὅσα ἡ χεὶρ, καὶ ἡ βουλὴ Θεοῦ προώρισε γενέσθαι*,^{Acts iv. 28.}
whatever the hand and counsel of God (or God's effectual purpose) *had predetermined to come to pass*. Such an especial care and providence of God, concerning this matter, so expressly and so

SERM. frequently recommended to our observation, do argue the very great moment and high worth thereof. What God declareth himself to have had so early and earnest a care of, must be matter of highest consideration and importance.

XXVII.

2. It was a matter of free consent and compact between God and his Son. God did freely and graciously (out of merciful regard to our welfare) proffer, that if he would please to undertake to redeem his (lost and enslaved) creature, an honourable and comfortable success to his enterprise; that he would accept his performances, and that the design should prosper in his hand: he did willingly embrace the proposal, and applied himself to the performance:

Isa. liii. 9, *When thou shalt make thy soul an offering for sin, thou shalt see thy seed, and prolong thy days, and the pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in thy hand: thou shalt see of the travail of thy soul, and shalt be satisfied;* that, in the prophet's language,

Heb. x. 7, 8. was God's proposition: and, *Lo, I come to do thy will, O God;* that was our Saviour's reply in correspondence and consent thereto. God, in consideration of what our Lord would obediently suffer, did,

Luke xxii. 29. as our Saviour telleth us, *διατίθεσθαι βασιλείαν, covenant to him a kingdom;* committing a sovereign authority, assigning an universal dominion to him;

Heb. ii. 9. in virtue of which transaction it was that *Jesus, for the suffering of death, was crowned with glory and honour;* that because he poured out his soul unto death, God divided him a portion with the great;

Isa. liii. 12. that he being obedient to the death, God exalted him, and gave him a name above all names. In this regard are God's elect and faithful people said to be given unto him as a retribution to him, *who*

gave himself for them ; (Thine they were, saith SERM.
our Lord to his Father, and thou gavest them me ;) XXVII.
 hence are we said to be *bought with a price* ; hence John xvii. 6.
is the church purchased by his blood : there was Gal. iii. 13.
 therefore a covenant and bargain driven between 1 Cor. vi.
 God and his Son concerning this affair ; and of 20.
 1 Pet. i. 19.
 Acts xx. 28.
 huge consideration surely must that affair be, where-
 in such persons do so deeply interest themselves,
 trafficking, and, as it were, standing upon terms
 with one another.

3. That the great excellency and efficacy of our
 Saviour's death and passion might appear, it was by
 manifold types foreshadowed, and in divers prophe-
 cies foretold. Indeed most of the famous passages of
 providence (especially the signal afflictions of eminent
 persons representing our Saviour) do seem to have
 been prefigurations of, or preludes to, his passion.
 The blood of the righteous protomartyr Abel, shed Gen. iv. 10.
 by an envious brother, for acceptable obedience per- Luke xi. 51.
 formed by him to God's will, and *crying to heaven*,
 might prefigure that blood, which cried also, although
 with another voice, *speaking better things than the* Heb. xii. 24,
blood of Abel ; not sad complaints, and suits for xi. 4.
 vengeance, but sweet entreaties and intercessions for
 mercy. Isaac, the only son, *the son of promise*, his Heb. xi. 7,
 oblation in purpose, or *death in parable*, as the 19.
 Apostle to the Hebrews speaketh, did plainly repre-
 sent our Saviour, the promised seed, his being really
 offered, and afterward miraculously restored to life.
 Joseph's being sold, and put into slavery by his en-
 vious brethren, being slanderously accused, and shut
 in prison, (*whose feet they hurt with fetters ; the iron* Psal. cv. 18.
entered into his soul ;) and this by God's disposal
 in order to his exaltation ; and that he might be a

SERM. XXVII. means of preserving life, and preparing a convenient habitation for the children of Israel, doth well resemble him, who *by suffering entered into his glory*; who *thereby being perfected, became author of salvation to his brethren, all true Israelites*; who *went to prepare mansions of rest and light, a heavenly Goshen, for them.* David's persecutions foregoing his royal dignity and prosperous state; which he expresseth in such strains as these; *The sorrows of death compassed me, and the floods of ungodly men made me afraid; the sorrows of hell compassed me about, and the snares of death prevented me*; how they may adumbrate the more real extremities of our Lord's afflictions, previous to his glorious exaltation, I leave you to consider; as also the rest of such passages, having a mysterious importance accommodable to this purpose. However, all the sacrifices of old, instituted by God, we may with fuller confidence affirm to have been chiefly preparatory unto and prefigurative of this most true and perfect sacrifice; by virtue whereof indeed those *ὑποδείγματα*, and *σκιαί*, umbratic representations (or insinuations) did obtain their substance, validity, and effect: if they did not signify this in design, they could signify nothing in effect; for as *without shedding of blood there was no remission*, (God's anger would not be appeased, nor his justice satisfied without it; it being *blood, which*, according to God's prescription, did *make atonement for the soul*,) as the appointment of those sacrifices did speak and signify; so *it was impossible that the blood of bulls and goats should take away sin*; that those *legal gifts and sacrifices should perfect the conscience of him that did the service*; that is, should entirely as-

Gen. xlv. 5.
Luke xxiv.

26.

Heb. v. 9.

John xiv. 2.

Psal xviii.

4.

Heb. ix. 23.

viii. 5.

Heb. ix. 22.

Levit. xii.

11.

Heb. x. 4.

ix. 9, 15. x

11.

ire him of pardon and impunity, or raise in him a **SERM**
rong and clear hope of God's favour: the lives of **XXVII.**
asts were not in value answerable, nor could fitly
e subrogated instead of men's souls, which had of-
nded, and thence were liable to death; the effu-
on of their blood could not reasonably satisfy a
an's conscience, sensible of guilt and fearful of
od's displeasure, that by it God was fully appeased;
hey must therefore refer unto a *κρείττον θυσία*, *a more* **Heb. ix. 23.**
cellent sacrifice; one more sufficient in itself, and
ore acceptable to God; in virtue of which, and in
egard thereto, sin might be thoroughly expiated,
od's wrath might be propitiated, divine vengeance
ight be removed, the mind of man therefore might
e comforted and contented. The high priest's en-
rance once a year into the holy of holies, *not with-* **Heb. ix. 7.**
ut blood to atone for his own and the people's ig- **x. 24.**
orances, (or miscarriages,) did imply, that our *great*
High Priest should make one bloody atonement for
he offences of mankind, and, passing through the
eil of mortal flesh, should enter into the true *sanc-*
um sanctorum of heaven, there to *appear in the*
resence of God for us; exhibiting the virtue of his
eritorious passion, together with his effectual inter-
ession for mercy toward us. Especially the paschal
amb, in its substance, (as a lamb, meek and gentle,)
1 its quality, (as without blemish and spot, pure
nd innocent,) in its manner of preparation and
ressing, (being killed by all the assembly, having
s blood sprinkled upon the doors of every house,
eing roasted with fire, having bitter herbs for its
auce,) with other observable circumstances about it,
as a most apposite emblem of *Christ our passover*; **1 Cor. v. 7.**
who not only by his death did signify, and mind us

SERM. of, but did really achieve our deliverance from the
 XXVII. mystical Egypt, our state of spiritual bondage. So

Acts iii. 18.
 Πραξάγ-
 γιαι.

fering of our Lord: *Those things*, saith St. Peter, *which God before had shewed by the mouth of all his prophets, that Christ should suffer, he hath so fulfilled*; not one prophet only, not some few; but

Luke xxiv.
 25, 26.
 xviii. 31.
 Acts xiii.
 27. xxvi.
 22.

all, saith he, (that is, either plainly or covertly, either directly or by consequence,) *have foreshewed* (or foretold) it: it is our negligence, or stupidity, if we do not discern it in them; as our Lord intimated, when he thus spake to his disciples: *O fools, and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken! ought not Christ* (ought he not, according to their presignifications and predictions) *to have suffered these things, and so to enter into his glory?*

Psal. xxii.
 cix, &c.

That David, an illustrious representative of the Messiah, doth often describe as belonging to himself, mortal agonies and sufferings, not well applicable *κατὰ λέξιν*, or in direct historical meaning, to his own person, and therefore in reason, according to a more high and perfect sense, to be understood of the Messiah himself; that Daniel plainly foretelleth, that in a certain time the Messiah *should be cut off*; that Isaiah doth in several places insinuate, and in the famous 53rd chapter of his prophecy doth clearly describe; the manner and kind of our Saviour's passion, is so evident, that even those of the Jewish doctors, who have been most earnest opposers of our Lord, have been forced to acknowledge, that there is to be as well one Messiah to suffer, as another to prosper, and reign in glory; being so gross as not to apprehend, or so perverse as not to acknowledge, the con-

istency between antecedent suffering and consequent SERM. XXVII.
glory ; between a night of *darkness* and sorrow, and Luke xxii. 53.
a day of night and joy breaking out from it ; not
being able or willing to distinguish between an ex-
ternal pomp in this world, and an external majesty
in the future state. But unto us God's so forward
care, *by the spirit of Christ in his prophets, προ-* 1 Pet. i. 11.
μαρτύρεσθαι to forewitness (as St. Peter speaketh, or
to testify beforehand) *the sufferings of our Saviour,*
and the glories succeeding, doth imply, with what
diligence of attention we should regard, with what
firmness of faith we should embrace, with what satis-
faction of heart we should entertain this great and
admirable dispensation.

4. We may consider, that this death was com-
passed by God's especial providence directing and
disposing it, although not without the active con-
currence of men : the treacherous disposition and
covetous appetite of Judas ; the envious humour and
blind zeal of the scribes and priests ; the wanton
fickleness and wild rudeness of the people ; the fear-
ful and selfish temper of the governor, were but in-
struments whereby God's *own hand* did inflict this Acts iv. 28.
sore chastisement upon his Son for us : it was *the* Isa. liii. 6,
Lord that *laid upon him the iniquities of us all ;* ⁴
by God he was stricken, smitten, and afflicted ;
Pilate, it is said, *had no power* to do what he did, John xix.
but what was given him from above ; the Jews ^{11.}
with their rulers proceeded rashly and ignorantly ;
otherwise, as St. Paul affirmeth, *they would not have* 1 Cor. ii. 8.
crucified the Lord of glory ; but God advisedly, as Acts iii. 17
xiii. 27.
St. Peter told them, *did accomplish it ; He did not* Rom. viii.
spare his own Son, but delivered him up for us : ^{32.}
he, as it were, suspended his bowels of pity toward

SERM. him, he withdrew his face of kindness from him,
 XXVII. out of compassion and benignity toward us; he
 used him severely, that he might deal favourably
 with us.

Yet did man actively concur therein; all mankind
 in a sort, by its representatives, was involved, as
 principally in the guilt for which, so in the guilt by
 which he suffered; there was a general conspiracy
 of Jew and Gentile practised against the life of their
 Acts iv. 27. common Saviour. *Of a truth, saith St. Peter, against
 thy holy child Jesus, whom thou hast anointed, were
 gathered together both Pontius Pilate, with the
 Gentiles, and with the people of Israel: in the Jews
 the horrid ingratitude of men, in the Gentiles their
 wretched infirmity did appear; the which, by their
 active efficacy toward our Lord's death, did signify
 the meritorious influence they also had upon it; that
 it was our iniquity and corruption which did cause it:
 so as a work of divine Providence, (the most admira-
 ble work ever accomplished by Providence,) as an act
 of human pravity, (the most heinous act ever commit-
 ted by men,) is the death of our Lord considerable.*

5. But more immediately the quality and condi-
 tion of our Saviour's person do most commend to
 us, and advance the worth of his death: if, as the
 Psalmist saith, *precious in the sight of the Lord is
 the death of his saints*; if the spotless candour and
 unblemished integrity of a lamb do make its *blood*
precious, and qualify it for an acceptable sacrifice;
 how valuable to God shall be the death of a person
 so perfectly holy and innocent; who did not so much
 as *know sin*; in whose mouth no guile was ever
 found; who was *holy, harmless, undefiled, removed*
 (at infinite distance removed) *from sinners*; who

Psal. cxvi.

15. lxxii.

14.

1 Pet. i. 19.

2 Cor. v. 21.

1 Pet. ii. 22.

1 John iii. 5.

Isa. liii. 9.

Heb. vii.

26, 27.

*ed not to offer sacrifices for his own sins; SERM.
 ose death therefore for others was apt to be more XXVII.
 ailable and acceptable! Again, if the life of a king
 (as king David's people told him) *worth ten thou-* 2Sam. xviii.
and lives; if it be a most enormous crime and 3. xxi. 17.
 ghest treason to imagine his death; how valuable
 ust be the death of a person so incomparably
 anscent in dignity, *of the Lord of glory, of*
the Prince of life! Ye denied the holy and the Acts iii. 15.
st one; ye slew the Prince of life: They cruci- 1 Cor. ii. 8.
ed the Lord of glory: so the apostles do aggra-
 te the business. But a further height, a perfect
 imensity indeed, of worth and efficacy, must needs
 xcrue to the death of our Saviour, from his being
 e Son of God; from his being God, (one and the
 me in nature with his almighty and all-glorious
 ather:) for it is *the blood of Christ, the Son* 1 John i. 7.
of God, which purgeth us from all sin; yea, Rev. i. 5, 6.
God himself did, as St. Paul saith in the Acts, Acts xx. 28.
urchase the church with his own blood; it is the Tit. ii. 14.
reat God, and our Saviour Jesus Christ, who
ve himself for us, that he might redeem us from
l iniquity: and, *Hereby,* saith St. John, *perceive* 1 John iii.
the love of God, because he laid down his life 16.
for us. That the immortal God should die, that the
 lost High should be debased to so low a condition,
 it cannot be heard without wonder, so it could
 not be undertaken without huge reason, nor accom-
 ished without mighty effect: well indeed might
 ch a condescension serve to advance us from the
 sest state to any pitch of honour and happiness;
 ell might one drop of that royal blood of heaven
 ffice to purchase many worlds, to ransom innu-
 erable lives of men, to expiate an infinity of sins,*

SERM. however grievous and foul. But so much for the
 XXVII. peculiar adjuncts and respects of our Lord's death.

3. Let us now consider the causes and principles whence it proceeded; which moved God to determine it, and our Lord to undertake it; they were in both acts most voluntary and free: of the Father
 Isa. liii. 10. it is said, *It pleased the Lord to bruise him*; and,
 Ps. xl. 7, 9. *Behold*, saith our Lord in the Psalm, *I come to do*
 Heb. x. 7. *thy will, O God*; that is, as the Apostle to the Hebrews expoundeth it, to offer, not the blood of beasts in sacrifice, but my own body, according to thy will
 John x. 18. and appointment: and, *This commandment*, saith he in St. John, *I received of my Father, to lay*
 John xviii. 11. *down my life*: and, *The cup*, saith he again, *which my Father hath given me, shall I not drink it?* so on the Father's part, and on our Saviour's
 John x. 18. likewise, it was no less voluntary; for, *None*, saith he, *taketh my life from me*, (that is, it is not from any necessity or compulsion that I do part with it,) *but I lay it down of myself*, (with absolute choice
 John vi. 51. and freedom;) *I have power to lay it down, and I*
 Matt. xxi. 28. *have power to resume it*: and, *The bread*, saith he,
 Gal. ii. 20, &c. *which I shall give, is my flesh, which I shall give*
 Tit. ii. 14. *for the life of the world: The Son of man came to give his life a ransom for many*. The yielding his flesh to death, the paying his life a ransom, were deeds of gift, perfectly free: and that both in regard to God the Father and the Son this performance was voluntary, St. Paul together thus expresseth;
 Gal. i. 4. *Who gave himself for our sins, that he might deliver us from this present evil world, according to the will of God and our Father*: so this death issued from the joint wills of God and his Son. But as the volitions of every intelligent and wise agent

o always proceed from some principle inclining, or SERM.
 re directed according to some impulsive cause mov- XXVII.
 ng to them, so divers principles and causes of these
 voluntary acts are declared in scripture; the chief of
 which are reducible to these two; one internally
 disposing God's goodness; the other externally in-
 iting man's distress. The case stood thus: man-
 kind lying in a sad and forlorn estate, oppressed by
 Satan, enslaved to sin, subject to a rigorous law,
 exposed to the severity of justice, tormented by the
 sense of guilt, fearful of divine wrath and due ven-
 geance; in short, by the sentence of heaven and by
 the suffrage of conscience within, condemned to pu-
 nishment unavoidable, and to intolerable misery;
 when, I say, lying in so desperately uncomfortable a
 condition, God's infinite goodness regarded his poor
 creature, his *bowels of compassion* yearned toward ^{Διὰ σπλάγ-}
 him, a desire of relieving sprang up in his will; ^{χνα ἰλίου.}
 hence was he moved to provide such a remedy, ^{Luke i. 78.}
 suitable and sufficient for his delivery; for the re-
 moving all those mischiefs and curing all those dis-
 tempers: the main source of all this wonderful per-
 formance, (as of all other providential dispensations
 and works, *ad extra*,) was that most excellent per-
 fection of God, which, in regard to this matter, is
 sometime termed *χρηστότης*, benignity, or bounty; ^{Tit. iii. 4.}
 implying the great benefit and advantage we do ^{Rom. ii. 4.}
 hence receive; sometimes grace, or favour, signify- ^{Eph. ii. 7.}
 ng the pure freeness in dispensing it, without any ^{Heb. ii. 9.}
 design of profit to himself, or any desert on our part, ^{Rom. iii.}
By the grace of God he tasted death for every ^{24.}
man;) sometimes mercy, denoting our bad deserts, ^{2 Cor. viii.}
 or obnoxiousness to justice and punishment; some- ^{9.}
 times pity, signifying the great need we had thereof, ^{Eph. ii. 8,}
^{5. i. 7.}
^{Tit. iii. 5.}
^{Luke i. 78.}
^{Eph. ii. 4.}
^{Heb. ii. 17.}

SERM. XXVII. by reason of our extreme distress and misery. Commonly also it is, by the most obliging and endearing name styled love, and philanthropy, intimating the earnest regard and benevolence God had to us as his creatures, and as capable of being benefited and bettered by him; *Herein*, saith St. Paul, *God commended his love toward us, in that we being yet sinners, Christ died for us*; and, God, saith St. John, *loved us, and sent his Son to be a propitiation for us*; and, God, saith our Lord himself, *so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son—that the world might be saved by him*.

By the way it is worth observing, that there is distinguishable a threefold love of God toward men, intimated in scripture. 1. A general love to mankind, antecedent to the sending our Lord, and his performances, being the ground of God's designing them; which may be called a love of pity, or mercy toward poor man lying under condemnation and distress; this is that *φιλανθρωπία τοῦ σωτῆρος ἡμῶν Θεοῦ*, *philanthropy of God our Saviour, which appeared in saving us*, (that is, in granting us the capacity and means of salvation,) *not by works of righteousness, which we had done, but by his mercy*; the love which *he commended, in that while we were sinners Christ died for us*. 2. A love, immediately consequent upon our Lord's performances and sufferings, and procured by them; whereby God is so far pleased with men, and reconciled to the world, that he *desireth all men's salvation*, and offereth to them terms and means thereof; in regard to which our Lord is said to be the Saviour of the world, and Redeemer of all men; of which love St. Paul speaketh, when he saith, that *being enemies we were re-*

conciled to God by the death of his Son ; and that God was in Christ reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their sins ; and that God having made peace by the blood of his cross, did reconcile by him all things unto himself, whether they be things in earth, or things in heaven ; the which may be called a love of reconciliation and favour ; or the grace of God, which came by Jesus Christ.

SERM.
XXVII.
2 Cor. v. 19.
Col. i. 20.
John i. 17.
Acts x. 33.
Rom. xi. 32.
Luke ii. 14.
1 Tim. ii. 4.

3. A peculiar love of friendship and complacence, which God beareth toward all those who do sincerely turn and steadfastly adhere to him, repenting of their sins and embracing the gospel, and persisting in obedience to his laws ; such God is every where represented to affect with tenderest love, as his faithful servants, his good friends, and dear children ; being *especially the Saviour of them* : this distinction is observable for our better understanding the passages of scripture concerning this matter ; in which God is sometime represented as bearing a general love to all men, sometime as more especially loving the faithful and good men.

The like principles and impulsive causes are said to move our Lord to undertake and undergo death for us ; it was goodness and love toward us that inclined him thereto : *Christ, saith St. Paul, loved us, and delivered up himself for us, an offering and sacrifice to God : He loved the church, and delivered up himself for it. He loved us, and washed us from our sins in his blood : Hereby we perceive the love of God, because he laid down his life for us : I live, saith St. Paul again, by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me.*

Eph. v. 2,
25.
Rev. i. 5.
1 John iii.
16.
(John xv.
13.)
Gal. ii. 20.

Such were the principles disposing, and causes in a sort moving ; to which we may add our sins, as

SERM. the meritorious causes of our Saviour's death; *He*
 XXVII. *died for our sins; He was wounded for our trans-*

gressions, he was bruised for our iniquities. He
 1 Cor. xv. 3. died for us, not only as for men, not only as for
 Heb. x. 12. 6. wretched men, but as for unjust and sinful men; as
 Isa. liii. 5, 2 Cor. v. 15. for enemies, and strangers to God; such as had
 Rom. v. 6, 8, 10. grievously displeased God, had incurred heinous
 1 Pet. iii. 18. guilt, had deserved, and were become obnoxious to
 severest punishment; so standing in need of recon-
 cilement, propitiation, and redemption. Had we
 been innocent and guiltless, there had wanted suffi-
 cient cause, or just reason for his death; God would
 not have been angry, justice could have had no pre-
 tence, or hold; we should not have been liable to
 suffer ourselves, nor could he have suffered for us.

Rom. vi. 23. Death is the debt, or *wages due to sin*; which he
 therefore paid, because we owed it, and could not
 Isa. liii. 6, 4, 11. discharge it: *All we, as it is said in the prophet,*
have gone astray; we have turned every one to

his own way; and the Lord (therefore) hath laid
on him the iniquity of us all: our sins were not
 only indirect or remote occasions of his death, but
 did procure it in way of desert: even as they would
 have been meritorious causes of our death, had he
 not undertaken for us, so were they the like causes
 of his death, who died for us, and in our stead; who

was made sin (that is, a sinner, or a sacrifice) *for*
 2 Cor. v. 21. *us; who gave himself ἀντίλυτρον, a ransom instead*
 1 Tim. ii. 6. *of us all;* paying his blood a price for us, and re-
 Matt. xx. 28. *deeming us thereby from all the penalties and in-*
 1 Cor. vi. 20. vii. 23. *conveniences we were liable to; buying us from the*
 Heb. ix. 12. *curse, by becoming a curse for us; who had upon*
 Gal. iii. 13. *him the chastisement of our peace; and did offer*
 1 Pet. i. 18. *up his soul an offering and sacrifice for our sins;*
 Rom. iii. 24. *up his soul an offering and sacrifice for our sins;*
 2 Pet. ii. 1. *up his soul an offering and sacrifice for our sins;*
 Eph. i. 7. *up his soul an offering and sacrifice for our sins;*
 Col. i. 14. *up his soul an offering and sacrifice for our sins;*

ereby *expiating them*, propitiating God's wrath, **SERM.**
 d reconciling God unto us, *purging us* from guilt, **XXVII.**
 d procuring entire remission for our sins; the which
 nsiderations do sufficiently argue our sins, in way
 desert, to have been the causes of his death.

Now for the ends which our Lord's death aimeth
 and the effects which it produceth, (these we
 n, because in reality they are the same,) they, in
 ipture reckoning and expression, are various and
 ny: the most general are these, comprehending
 vers others subordinate to them.

1. The illustration of God's glory, by demonstrat-
 g and displaying therein his most excellent attri-
 tes and perfections; so doth St. Paul teach us;
Whom God, saith he, hath set forth a propitiation
faith in his blood, εἰς ἔνδειξιν τῆς δικαιοσύνης αὐτοῦ,
a demonstration of his righteousness; that is,
 I take it, of his goodness, his justice, his fidelity,
 constancy, of all those commendable perfections,
 ich are expressed in dealing with others; and
 r Lord, his passion being instantly to follow, made
 s reflection; *Now is the Son of man glorified,*
and God is glorified in him; and, I have glorified
re upon earth; I have finished the work which
u gavest me to do. God did therein shew him-
 f most highly good and gracious, in so providing
 the welfare of those who deserved nothing of
 n, who deserved ill of him, who had offended and
 ured him very heinously: he manifested himself
 st strictly just, in not suffering iniquity to go un-
 nished, but rather than so, exposing his own dear
 1 to punishment, and in him choosing himself to
 fer; he declared his wisdom in contriving so ad-
 rable an expedient, whereby both his goodness

Isa. liii. 5,
 10.
 Heb. x. 12.
 1 John ii. 2.
 iv. 10.
 Rom. iii. 25.
 Heb. ii. 17.
 Rom. v. 10,
 11.
 2 Cor. v.
 19.
 Eph. ii. 16.
 i. 7.
 Heb. ix. 14,
 23, 26.
 John iii. 36.
 Matt. xxvi.
 28.
 Col. i. 14.
 1 John i. 7.
 Rev. i. 5.
 Rom. iii. 5.
 Col. i. 27.
 Eph. ii. 7.

(John xxi.
 20.)

John xiii.
 31. xvii. 4.

SERM. might be exercised, and his justice not infringed;
XXVII. he shewed his veracity, fidelity, and constancy, in
 executing by his providence what he before had de-
 signed and promised, although so grievous and bitter
 to the Son of his love: he therein also laid a ground
 of declaring his almighty power, in raising him
 from the dead, as likewise of his goodness and just-
 ice in exalting him: thus by our Saviour's death
 was the divine glory much illustrated, and our good
 consequently promoted; for that we therein con-
 templating him so amiable for goodness, so terrible
 for justice, so venerable for all excellency, may be
 induced thence to love him, to dread him, to wor-
 ship and reverence him, as it becometh us, and as it
 is necessary for us in order to our happiness.

2. The dignifying and exaltation of our Lord
 himself; by acquiring unto him in a manner a new
 right unto, and instating him in an universal domin-
 ion, in a transcendent glory, in perfect joy accruing
 to him by remuneration for so excellent an instance
 of submission and obedience to God's will. This is
 that which our Lord foresaw and foretold; *If God
 was glorified in him, then will God glorify him in
 himself, and shall straightway glorify him:* and,
To this end, saith St. Paul, *Christ died, that he
 might be the Lord of the dead and living:* and,
*For the suffering of death he was crowned with
 glory and honour,* saith the Apostle to the Hebrews:
*He was obedient to the death, therefore God
 exalted him:* and, *The Prince of our salvation was
 perfected by suffering:* and, *For the joy that was
 set before him he endured the cross;* and, *He, said
 the prophet of him, shall see the travail of his soul,
 and be satisfied:* and, *Worthy,* say the heavenly host

in the Apocalypse, *is the Lamb that is slain, (worthy* SERM. XXVII.
is he, for that he was slain, and did redeem us to
God by his blood,) to receive power, and riches, (Tit. ii. 14.)
and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory,
and blessing.

3. The salvation of mankind; the which he was designed to procure by his death, and in many respects he did promote it thereby.

He did it by appeasing that wrath of God which he naturally beareth toward iniquity, and reconciling God to men, who by sin were alienated from him; by procuring a favourable disposition and intentions of grace toward us. *While we were sinners,* saith Rom. v. 8,
St. Paul, Christ died for us, (and sinners, or wicked ^{10.}
men, God cannot like or endure: *Thou art not,* Psal. v. 4.
saith the Psalmist, *a God that hast pleasure in* xi. 5. xxxiv. 16.
wickedness, neither shall evil dwell with thee; the
foolish shall not stand in thy sight; thou hatest all
workers of iniquity: and, *The wicked, and him* Hab. i. 3.
that loveth violence, his soul hateth: yet for us, Isa. iii. 8.
being such, Christ died, removing thereby that just hatred and displeasure; as St. Paul presently after expresth and expoundeth it; *When,* saith he, *we*
were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the
death of his Son:) and elsewhere, *God,* saith he, 2 Cor. v. 19.
was in Christ reconciling the world unto himself,
not imputing their trespasses unto them; the non-imputation of our sins is expressed as a singular effect, an instance, an argument of his being in mind reconciled and favourably disposed toward us: and again; *He died to reconcile both* (Jews and Gen- Eph. ii. 16.
tiles) *unto God in one body by the cross, having* Col. i. 20, 21, &c.
slain the enmity thereby; that is, God being thereby reconciled to all people, they became thence

SERM. united together in the common relation of friends
 XXVII. and fellow-servants to God; becoming, as it there
 Ephes. ii. follows, *fellow-citizens with the saints, and of the*
 19. *household of God*, (or allied unto him by spiritual
 Οἰκτιροῖ τοὺ
 Θεοῦ. relations.)

Again, It furthered our salvation, by purchasing
 the remission of our sins, and justification of our
 persons; our freedom from condemnation and pu-
 nishment, our appearance as upright, and acceptable
 in God's sight; upon the conditions of faith and re-
 pentance propounded in the gospel; in regard to
 which effects he is said thereby to redeem us from
 our sins, to bear them, to take them away, to ex-
 piate them, to cleanse, to purge, to sanctify us from
 Rom. viii. them: *Who shall lay any thing to the charge of*
 34. *God's elect? Who shall condemn them? It is*
Christ that died; that is, Christ's death hath freed
 them from all liableness to guilt and condemnation.
 Gal. iii. 13. *Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the*
 (1 Pet. ii. *law, being made a curse for us*; that is, he by
 24.) undergoing an accursed kind of death hath purchas-
 ed an indemnity and impunity for the transgressors
 Rom. v. 8. of God's law: and, *Being justified by his blood,*
we shall be saved by him from wrath; that is, from
 the effects of God's just displeasure, condemnation,
 Ephes. i. 7. and punishment: and, *In whom*, saith St. Paul
 Col. i. 14. *again clearly, we have redemption through his*
blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the
 Matt. xxvi. *riches of his grace*: and, *My blood*, saith our Lord,
 28. *is the blood of the new testament, which was shed*
 Heb. ix. 27. *for many for the remission of sins*: and, *Christ*,
 26, 28. vii. *saith the Apostle to the Hebrews, was once offered*
 27. *to bear the sin of many*, (or of the many, the multi-
 tude of men.) *Now once in the end of the world*

hath he appeared, εἰς ἀθέτησιν ἀμαρτίας, for the abo- SERM.
XXVII.
lition of sin by the sacrifice of himself: and, Be-
hold, said St. John the Baptist, the Lamb of God, John i. 29.
that taketh away the sins of the world: and, The (Heb. x. 4,
blood of Christ doth, saith St. John, cleanse us from 11.)
all sin: He loved us, and washed us from our sins 1 John i. 7.
in his own blood: He is a propitiation for our Rev. i. 5.
sins; and not for our sins only, but for the sins of 1 John ii.
the whole world: and, Jesus, that by his blood he 2. iv. 10.
might sanctify the people, did suffer out of the Heb. xiii.
gate: He delivered himself up for the church, that 12.
he might sanctify it—that he might present it to Eph. v. 25,
himself a glorious church, not having spot, or 27.
wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be
holy and without blemish.

Our Lord also by his death procured our salvation, as having thereby purchased for us means sufficient to free us from the power and dominion of sin, to purify our hearts, and sanctify our lives; for, *He gave himself for us, that he might redeem us* Tit. ii. 14.
from all iniquity, and purify to himself a peculiar
people, zealous of good works: and, He gave him-
self for our sins, that he might redeem us from
this present evil world: and, We were redeemed, 1 Pet. i. 18,
not with corruptible things, with silver, or with 19.
gold; but with the precious blood of Christ, as of
a lamb without blemish and without spot, from our
vain conversation, delivered from our fathers: and,
He by his own self bare our sins in his own body 1 Pet. ii. 24.
on the tree, that we being dead to sin should live
unto righteousness: We are with him dead to sin; Rom. vi. 2,
our old man is crucified with him, that the body of 6, 8, 11.
sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should
not serve sin.

SERM.
XXVII.

In subordination to, coincidence or concurrence with, the principal designs and effects, our Lord also died for the reparation of God's honour, which we by contempt of his authority and violation of his law had impaired, but our Saviour by so signal an obedience thereto did repair ; for the recovery of God's right, which was infringed by withdrawing so great and noble a part of his creation from its due allegiance and service ; the which he recovered and restored to him ; for the satisfaction to God's justice, provoked by so heinous impieties and iniquities ; the which was abundantly performed by so infinitely valuable a compensation and sacrifice offered there-to.

Also for ratification of the new covenant between God and us ; whence his blood is called, *the blood of the covenant, the blood of the new testament.*

Heb. x. 29.
Matt. xxvi.
28.

1 Cor. xi. 25.
Col. i. 20.
Eph. ii. 25.

For the pacifying and reconciling all things in heaven and earth ; removing all causes of dissension and distance ; inducing obligations to concord and charity.

1 Cor. xv.
55.
Heb. ii. 14,
15.
Καταργή-
σας.

For pulling out *the sting*, and removing the terrors of death ; *destroying* (or defeating) *him that had the power of death*, and delivering them who through the fear of death are all their lifetime subject to death.

Col. ii. 15.

For the suppressing, vanquishing, and *triumphing over the powers of hell* and darkness, the which he did, as St. Paul telleth us, achieve *upon his cross* : and by his death he telleth us, that the *prince of this world was condemned*, and cast out.

John xii.
31. xvi. 11.

For engaging us to the practice of all righteousness and obedience, (especially to the most excellent, high, and hard parts thereof, charity, humility, meek-

ness, patience, self-denial, utmost constancy and per- SERM. XXVII.
 severance,) both from our obligation in regard to
 what he suffered for us, and in imitation of his ex-
 ample; for, *We should run with patience the race* Heb. xii. 1, 2.
that is set before us, looking unto Jesus, the author
and finisher of our faith, who for the joy that was
set before him endured the cross, despising the
shame: and, Christ having suffered for us in the 1 Pet. iv. 1, 12.
flesh, we should, saith St. Peter, arm ourselves with
the same mind,—so as no longer to live the rest of
our time in the flesh to the lust of men, but to the
will of God.

Lastly, for attestation unto and confirmation of
 divine truth; sealing by his blood that heavenly
 doctrine which he taught, and *witnessing before* 1 Tim. vi. 13.
Pontius Pilate a good confession: he was the
 Prince of martyrs; who, as *he for this end, as he* John xviii. 37.
told Pilate, was born, and for this end came into
the world, that he might bear witness to the truth,
 so he especially did accomplish that glorious design
 by his death; *enduring the contradiction of sinners* Heb. xii. 3, 4.
against himself, resisting unto blood in combating
against sin; by his blood indeed all other witnesses Rev. xii. 11.
 of truth did, as it is said in the Revelation, accom-
 plish their warfare, and *obtain victory: his blood*
purchased for them their resolution and strength;
 his promises supported them, his example did ani-
 mate them, to the profession and maintenance of
 truth, in the greatest dangers and most violent as-
 saults.

Such ends did the death of our Lord regard, such
 fruits did grow from it, which the time permitteth
 us but thus cursorily to touch.

5. Now for the practical influences the considera-

SERM. tion of this point should have upon us, they are
 XXVII. many and great; but we now can only name or insinuate them.

1. It should beget in us highest degrees of love and gratitude toward God and toward our Saviour, in regard to this highest expression of love and instance of beneficence toward us. Greater love God could not have shewed, than in thus destinating and offering up his only dearest Son to death (a most
 John xv. 13. painful and shameful death) for our sake; and, *Greater love*, he told us himself, *than this hath no man, than that one should lay down his life for his friends*; no man hath greater, except himself, who even laid his life down for his enemies and persecutors: and love so incomparably, so extremely great, doth surely require correspondent degrees of love and thankfulness.

2. It should raise in us great faith and hope in God, excluding all distrust and despair, that God will not bestow upon us whatever is needfully or
 Rom. v. 10. conveniently good for us; for, *He*, as St. Paul argueth, *who did not spare his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things?*

3. Particularly, it should comfort us, and satisfy our conscience in regard to the guilt of our sins, however contracted, supposing that we do heartily repent of them; for that *there is no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit*; and, that *being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ*; by virtue of his death we sincerely repenting are freed from all condemnation, we truly believing have a firm and sure peace with

Rom. viii.
 1. v. 1.

God: *Who shall lay any thing to the charge of* SERM. XXVII.
God's elect? Who is he that condemneth, seeing it
is Christ that hath died? We are very blameably Rom. viii. 34
 incredulous, if, having such an assurance from God,
 and such an engagement upon him, we distrust his
 mercy.

4. It discovereth unto us the heinousness of our
 sins, and thence should breed in us a vehement de-
 testation, together with a great dread of them; a
 detestation of them, as having provoked God to such
 a pitch of displeasure, causing him to deal thus se-
 verely with his own beloved Son; as having brought
 so heavy suffering upon a Person so infinitely high
 in dignity, excellent in worth, kind and gracious to
 us; a dread of them, as exposing us, if we do not
 avoid and forsake them, to the most grievous pains Luke xxiii. 31.
 and miseries; for, *if these things were done to a*
green tree, (if such punishments were inflicted upon
 one so innocent, so worthy, so little obnoxious to the
 fire of divine wrath and vengeance,) *what shall be*
done to the dry? that is, what will become of us,
 who are so guilty, so combustible by that fire, if we
 by presumptuous commission of sin, and impenitent
 continuance therein, do incense God against us?

5. It should work in us a kindly contrition and
 remorse for our sins, which were indeed the mur-
 derers of so good a friend and loving a Saviour:
 others were but instruments; they were the principal
 authors of his death; they most truly betrayed him,
 they accused him, they condemned him, they lifted
 him up to the accursed tree; they moved God, and en-
 abled men to inflict this horrible punishment on him.

6. It should deter us from them, and engage us
 most carefully to avoid them, as those which in a

SERM. sort do exact another death from him ; *crucifying*
 XXVII. *him afresh*, as the Apostle to the Hebrews telleth
 Heb. vi. 9. us, *vilifying and defiling the precious blood of the*
 x. 29. *covenant*, (as he likewise teacheth.)

7. It should engage us to a patient submission and resignation of ourselves to the will and providence of God ; *forasmuch as Christ hath suffered for us in the flesh*, we should, as St. Peter adviseth, *arm ourselves likewise with the same mind* : and, *Let*, exhorteth St. Paul, *the same mind be in us that was in Christ Jesus ; who being in the form of God humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross* : we should not disdain, nor upon any account be displeased or unwilling in bearing any cross or affliction, to follow the pattern
 Heb. xii. 1. of our great Master ; *looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith, who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross*.

8. It doth also oblige us to the deepest mortification in conformity to his death : we should be *with*
 Phil. iii. 20. *him* (or after him) *crucified* to the lusts and affec-
 Gal. v. 24. tions of the flesh, to the fashions, glories, desires, and
 ii. 20. delights of the world ; *knowing this, that our old*
 1 Pet. iv. 2. *man is crucified with him ; that the body of sin*
 Col. iii. 3, *might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not*
 5. *serve sin*.
 Rom. vi. 5, 6.

9. It is also a strong engagement to the fullest measure of charity toward our brethren ; for, *If*,
 1 John iv. saith St. John, *God so loved us*, (as to give his own
 11. iii. 16. Son to die for us,) *then ought we to love one another*, in a degree answerable to such an obligation and pattern : *If*, addeth the same apostle, *he laid down his life for us, then ought we also to lay down our lives for the brethren*.

10. In fine, we hence appear obliged to yield up **SERM.**
ourselves wholly to the service of our Saviour; to **XXVII.**
the promoting of his interest and glory: since *we*, **1 Cor. vi.**
as St. Paul admonisheth us, *are not our own, being* **20. vii. 23.**
bought with a price; and must *therefore glorify*
God in our body, and in our spirit, which are
God's, by a purchase so dear and precious; since,
as that apostle again mindeth us, *Christ died for all*, **2 Cor. v. 15.**
that they which live might not live to themselves,
but to him that died for them; this being, let us not
wrong *the Lord who bought us*, by withholding his **2 Pet. ii. 1.**
due, the price of his dearest blood; let us not abuse
him, by defeating his purpose, no less advantageous
to ourselves, than honourable to him; but as by be-
ing our Saviour he hath deserved to be our Lord, so
in effect let him ever be; let us ever believe him so
in our heart, confess him with our mouth, and avow
him in our practice; which that we may do, God of
his infinite mercy, by his holy grace, vouchsafe unto
us, through *Jesus Christ our Lord*. Amen.

Now, Unto him that loved us, and washed us **Rev. i. 5.**
from our sins in his own blood, and hath made us
kings and priests unto God and his Father: to
him be glory and dominion for ever and ever.

Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive **Rev. v. 12.**
power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and
honour, and glory, and blessing.

Blessing, and honour, and glory, and power, be **Rev. v. 13.**
unto him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto
the Lamb for ever and ever. Amen.

He descended into Hell.

SERMON XXVIII.

ACTS ii. 27.

Because thou wilt not leave my soul in hell.

SERM. XXVIII. **ST. PETER** in his sermon to the Jews cites these words of the Psalmist to prove the resurrection of Christ. And because upon these words our Saviour's *descent into hell* seems to be grounded, I shall from this text take occasion to discourse of this article of the Creed, Κατελθόντα εἰς ᾗδου, *He descended into hell*.

This article is of later standing in the Creed, and doth not appear to have had place in any of the most ancient ones public or private; excepting that of Aquileia; into which also perhaps it might have been inserted not long before Ruffinus's time; and the meaning thereof hath always (both in more ancient times among the Fathers, and afterwards among the Schoolmen, and lately among modern divines) been much debated, having yielded occasion to many prolix and elaborate discourses: to recite the several opinions about it, or different explications thereof, with the reasons produced to maintain or disprove them, were a matter of greater time and pains than I can well afford; and to decide the controversies about it, a matter of greater difficulty than

I could hope to achieve. Wherefore (both upon SERM. XXVIII. these accounts, and because I rather choose to insist upon matters more clear in their nature, and more practical in consequence) I should be willing altogether to wave this obscure and perplexed subject; yet however somewhat to comply with expectation, I shall touch briefly upon some things seeming conducive to the clearing, or to the ending of the controversies about it.

Now whereas there may be a threefold inquiry; one, concerning the meaning of these words (*he descended into hell*) intended by those who inserted them; another, concerning the most proper signification of the words themselves; a third, concerning the meaning they are in consistency with truth capable of;

1. The first I resolve, or rather remove, by saying, it seems needless to dispute, what meaning they, who placed the words here, did intend; since, 1. It is possible, and by many like instances might be declared so, and perhaps not unlikely, that they might both themselves upon probable grounds believe, and for plausible ends propound to the belief of others, this proposition, without apprehending any distinct sense thereof; as we believe all the scriptures, and commend them to the faith of others, without understanding the sense of many passages therein: and since, 2. Perhaps they might by them intend some notion not certain, or not true, following some conceits then passable among divers, but not built upon any sure foundation, (like that of the millennium; and the necessity of infants communicating, &c. which were anciently in great vogue, but are now discarded :) and since, 3. To speak roundly, their

SERM. bare authority, whoever they were, (for that doth
 XXVIII. not appear,) could not be such, as to oblige us to be
 of their minds, whatever they did mean or intend; they perhaps were such, to whom we might owe much reverence, but should not be obliged to yield entire credence to their opinions. But further,
 4. Were I bound to speak my sense, I should say, that, supposing they had any distinct meaning, they did intend to affirm, that our Saviour's soul did, by a true and proper kind of motion, descend into the regions infernal, or beneath the earth; where they conceived the souls of men were detained: for this appears to have been the more general and current opinion of those times, which it is probable they did comply with herein, whencesoever fetched, however grounded.

2. As to the second inquiry, concerning the signification of the words, what may be meant by *he descended*; whether our Saviour himself, according to his humanity, or his soul, or his body, called *he* by synecdoche: what by *descended*, whether (to omit that sense, which makes the whole sentence an allegory, denoting the sufferance of infernal or hellish pains and sorrows, as too wide from the purpose; whether, I say) by *descending* may be signified a proper local motion toward such a term, or an action so called in respect to some such motion accompanying it; or a virtual motion by power and efficacy in places below: what by *hell*, whether a state of being, or a place; if a place, whether that where bodies are reposed, or that to which souls do go; and if a place of souls, whether the place of good and happy souls, or that of bad and miserable ones; or indifferently, and in common of both those; for such a manifold

ambiguity these words have, or are made to have; **SERM. XXVIII.**
and each of these senses are embraced and contend-
ed for: I shall not examine any of them, nor further
meddle in the matter, than by saying,

1. That the Hebrew word *sheol* (upon the true
notion of which the sense of the word *hell* (or *hades*)
in this place is conceived to depend) doth seem ori-
ginally, most properly, and most frequently (perhaps
constantly, except when it is translated, as all words
sometimes are, to a figurative use) to design the
whole region protended downward from the surface
of the earth to a depth (according to the vulgar
opinion, as it seems anciently over the world) indefi-
nite and unconceivable; vastly capacious in exten-
sion, very darksome, desolate, and dungeon-like in
quality, (whence it is also frequently styled the *pit*,
^a the *lowest pit*, ^b the *abyss*, ^c the *depths of the earth*,
^d the *darkness*, ^e the *depths of hell*.) I need not la-
bour much to confirm the truth of this notion, since
it is obvious, that this *sheol* (when most absolutely
and properly taken, the circumstances of discourse
about it implying so much) is commonly opposed to
heaven, not only in situation, but in dimension and
distance; as when Job, speaking of the unsearch-
ableness of the divine perfections, saith, *It is as high*
as heaven; what canst thou do? deeper than hell;
what canst thou know? and the prophet Amos;
Though they dig into hell, thence shall mine hand
take them; though they climb into heaven, thence
will I bring them down.

2. I say further, because the bodies (or visible re-
mainders) of persons dying do naturally fall down, or
are put into the bosom of this pit, which is therefore
an universal grave and receptacle of them, therefore

Nobis infe-
ri—in fosso
terræ et in
alto vasti-
tas, et in ip-
sis visceri-
bus ejus ab-
strusa pro-
funditas.
Tertul. de
An. 55.
Απώλυσ.
Prov. xv.
11.
Διαφθερά.
Prov. xxvii.
20.
^a *Isa.*
xxxviii. 18.
Ps. lxxxviii.
6.
Ecclus. xxi.
^{10.}
^b *Ps. lxxi.*
^{20.}
John ii. 6.
Rom. x. 7.
^c *Psal. lxxi.*
^{20.}
^d *Job xvii.*
^{13.}
Psal. cxliii.
^{3.}
Eccles. vi.
^{4.}
¹ *Sam. ii. 9.*
^e *Prov. ix.*
^{18.}
Job xi. 8.
Amos ix. 2.
(Ps. cxxxix.
8.)
(Deut.
xxxii. 22.
Isa. lvii. 9.)

SERM. to die is frequently termed καταβαίνειν εἰς ᾄδου, or
 XXVIII. *κατάγεσθαι εἰς ᾄδου, to descend, or to be brought down*
 into this *hell*; which happening to all men without
 Ps. lxxxix. exception, (for, as the Psalmist says, *there is no man*
 48. *that shall deliver his soul* (or his life, or himself)
from the hand of this all-grasping hell,) therefore it
 is attributed promiscuously to all men, good and bad
 alike; *I will go down*, saith good Jacob, *unto the*
 Gen. xxxvii. 35. *grave, unto my son mourning*, (καταβήσομαι εἰς ᾄδου,
 xliv. 29, 31. *I will go down to sheol*, this common grave of man-
 kind,) and so frequently of others. Whence this
hell is apt figuratively to be put for, and to signify
 equivalently with, death itself; and it is once by the
 LXX. so translated, (and St. Peter seems to use the
 phrase^f after them;) for death, I say, or for the law,
 condition, and state of death: as in that of Hezekiah
 f 2 Sam. xxii. 6. in the prophet Isaiah^g; *Sheol cannot praise thee;*
 Acts ii. 24. *death cannot celebrate thee: they that go down*
 Ὁ δὲ τις θα- into the *pit cannot hope for thy truth*: where οἱ ἐν
 ᾄδου, The sorrows of hell com-
 passed me about.
 g Isa. xxxviii. 18. *and death*,) are the same, and opposed to the living,
 of whom it is said, *The living, the living he shall*
praise thee.

3. I say further, that this word, according to an-
 cient use, seems not to signify the place whither
 men's souls do go, or where they abide; for that,

1. It can hardly be made appear, that the ancient
 Hebrews either had any name appropriated to the
 place of souls, or did conceive distinctly which way
 they did go; otherwise than that, as the Preacher
 Eccles. xii. 7. speaks, *they returned unto God who gave them;*
 and that they did abide *in God's hand*; especially
 the souls of the just, according to that in the book
 of Wisdom; *The souls of the righteous are in the*

Wisd. iii. 1.
 (Deut. xxxiii. 3.)

hand of God, and there shall no torment touch SERM. XXVIII.
them. And for that,

2. It seems, they did rather conceive the souls of men, when they died, to go upward than downward; as the Preacher again intimates, when he differenceth the spirit of man dying from the soul of beasts; *the soul of beasts descending with its body to the earth; the spirit of man ascending unto God,* Eccles. iii. 21. to be disposed by him according to his pleasure and justice. And by Enoch's *being taken to God,* Gen. v. 24. (whose special residence is expressed to be in heaven above,) and by Elias's translation *up into heaven,* 2 Kings ii. 11. (as it is in the text of the history,) it is probable, they did rather suppose the souls of the righteous to ascend, than to be conveyed downward into subterraneous caverns, those *μυκοὶ ᾗδου, closets of hell,* as Wisdom. xvii. 24. the book of Wisdom calls them; that *βόθρος ᾗδου, deep pit of hell,* as it is in Ben-Sirach; to ascend, I say, 10, 11. Οὐρανὸς ἵτι ἀβυσσὸς ᾗδου. Chrys. ad Heb. ix. 8. Eph. iii. 15. Heb. xi. 16. xii. 22. Isa. xxxviii. 18. whether into the supreme heaven, or no, is not material; but somewhither above, nearer unto God's most special residence, into a happy place.

3. I add, that if those ancients had by *sheol* meant the receptacle or mansion of souls, it is not likely they would have used such expressions as those: *The grave (sheol) cannot praise thee; death cannot celebrate thee; they that go down into the pit cannot hope for thy truth;* so Hezekiah spake: *In death there is no remembrance of thee; in sheol who shall give thee thanks?* so David said: and, *There is no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom in sheol, whither thou goest;* so the Preacher; who hardly it seems could say so, if by *sheol* he meant the place of souls; except he should also mean, that souls after death became deprived of

SER M. all life and sense. The son of Sirach likewise speaks
 XXVIII. in the same manner: *ὑψίστῳ τις αἰνέσει ἐν ᾅδου; Who shall praise the Most High in hell, instead of them which live and give thanks? Thanksgiving perisheth from the dead, as from one that is not: the living and sound in heart shall praise the Lord.*

Ecclus.
 xviii. 27, 28.

Luke xvi.
 23.

I must confess, that afterwards (even before our Saviour's time) the word *ᾅδης* was assumed by the Jews to design (as it did among the Greeks) either the place of souls in common, or more strictly the place of souls condemned to punishment and pain, for their bad lives here: Josephus doth often use the word in the first of these senses; and in the New Testament it seems peculiarly applied to the latter; as in the parable of the rich man, who being *ἐν τῷ ᾅδῃ, in hell and torments*, did thence *lift up his eyes, and behold afar off Lazarus in Abraham's bosom*: but we cannot hence infer the same concerning the ancient meaning of the word *sheol*; especially considering how the Jews, after the prophetic days, in their dispersions becoming acquainted with the world, did borrow some notions and expressions from elsewhere; which expressions our Saviour and his apostles might well retain, when they were suitable and accommodable unto truth.

3. But however it be determined concerning the proper sense in general of this principal word in the proposition, and of the rest depending thereon, as to their signification here; I do thus, as to the present case, and the last main question propounded about the meaning, whereof the words are capable with truth, answer briefly.

1. If we do interpret the *descent into hell* here affirmed of our Saviour's interment, or being laid in

the bosom of that universal grave we before spake SERM. XXVIII.
of; or if (in a notion little differing from that) we
take these words for a phrase (taking its ground
thence in the manner forementioned) importing no
otherwise than when it was spoken of Jacob and
others, that our Saviour did really pass into the
state of death; we are sure therein not to err; the
proposition so understood being most certainly true:
we shall also hereby be able fairly to satisfy the first
and best (if not the only) reason of this proposition
being commended to our belief. For that place in
the Acts which seems to have been the occasion and
the main ground of this proposition being asserted
in these terms, doth not refuse, but commodiously
admits this interpretation: for our Saviour's *soul* Acts ii. 31.
xiii. 34.
not being left in hell, and not seeing corruption,
is plainly by St. Peter himself interpreted of his re-
surrection; *David*, saith he, *foreseeing this, spake*
of Christ's resurrection: and, in like manner, by
St. Paul, *As concerning that he raised him from*
the dead, now no more to see corruption, he said in
this wise—that speech, I say, *Our Saviour's soul*
not being left in hell, and, not seeing corruption, is
by the apostles interpreted to denote our Saviour's
resurrection; that is, his being freed from the bands
of death, and raised from the grave, before his flesh
had underwent corruption; and it is opposed unto
David's continuing in death and seeing corruption;
his body being corrupted and consumed in the grave;
the apostles not designing to assert or prove more,
than our Lord's resurrection: David, argue they,
fell on sleep, and hath continued till now in that
state; David remained unto this day in the grave,
and so his body being reduced to dust saw corrup-

SERM. XXVIII. tion ; ἐτελεύτησε καὶ ἐτάφη, *he died and was buried*, without any reversion : therefore that speech of his in the Psalm must not fully and ultimately be understood of him, to whom they did not so exactly agree ; but of such an one, who did not abide in that deadly sleep, whose flesh, being opportunely raised, did avoid the sight (or undergoing) of corruption. And whereas it is said, τὴν ψυχὴν μου, *my soul*, or *my life* ; nothing can be thence drawn greatly prejudicial to this exposition ; for (to omit that bolder exposition of Beza, who sometime did by the soul understand the dead body, translating the words, *Non derelinques cadaver meum in sepulchro*) nothing is more usual than both for the flesh and for the soul (each of them synecdochically) to signify the person, considered as sometime endued with life ; *Every one that sinneth shall be put to death*, and, *That soul shall be cut off*, are terms equivalent in the law ; *The soul that eateth*, *The soul that toucheth*, and the like phrases do often occur ; and those expressions, *To deliver their soul from death* ; *God will redeem my soul from the power of the grave* ; *What man is he that shall not see death, that shall deliver his soul from the hand of the grave* ? do seem parallel to this, *Thou shalt not leave my soul in hell* ; which yet do import no more, than the persons there spoken of respectively to be preserved from death.

Again, taking *soul* for the *living soul*, or that faculty by which we live, and *hell* for the state of death, the words mentioned, *Thou wilt not leave my soul in hell*, will have this natural exposition, agreeable to the apostle's design ; Thou wilt not suffer me to continue deprived of life, till my flesh

be corrupted. It is also observable, that St. Paul, SERM.
in the 13th of the Acts, neglecting the former part, XXVIII.
Thou shalt not leave my soul in hell, contents him-
self with the latter, *Thou wilt not yield thy Holy*
One to see corruption; intimating both parts to
signify the same thing.

If it be objected as an inconvenience to this ex-
plication of the words here in the Creed, that, ad-
mitting it, they signify no more than what was be-
fore expressed in plain words, *dead and buried*;
and so contain only a needless repetition; I answer,

1. That this objection concerns them who inserted
the words here; who yet, even supposing this ex-
position to be good, might be excusable, as suspect-
ing it possible that our Saviour's being *ἐν ᾧδου*, ac-
cording to St. Peter, might imply more than this, al-
though they knew not what distinctly; who also might
perhaps intend somewhat by these words different
from this sense, but not so truly applicable to them,
or agreeable to the truth of the thing; I answer,

2. That to say our Saviour did continue in the
state of death for some time, doth add somewhat
above his being dead and buried; wherefore thus
understanding the *descent* doth not render it alto-
gether superfluous.

3. That a greater inconvenience seems to arise
from expounding them otherwise; the doing so re-
flecting upon the more ancient compilers both of
this and other breviaries of faith, as the Nicene and
Constantinopolitan councils, Irenæus, Tertullian, &c.
who left them out; which they should not have
done, if they contain any thing highly material, and
different from what is here otherwise expressed,
whose credit is (as I conceive) more to be tendered,

SERM. than of their juniors and followers unknown to us;
 XXVIII. and so much the more, for that in a matter of this

1 Cor. xv.
 3, 4.

kind, defect or omission is less tolerable, than any
 redundancy in expression. Which inconvenience
 may seem in a manner to reach higher, even to St.
 Paul himself; who in the fifteenth chapter of his
 First Epistle to the Corinthians, declaring the sum
 of what he both learned and taught concerning our
 Saviour's last grand performances, only mentions
 his death, burial, and resurrection; *I delivered unto
 you first, that Christ died for our sins according
 to the scriptures; and that he was buried, and
 that he rose again the third day;* which enumera-
 tion of his, we may, it seems, well acquiesce in, as
 sufficient and complete, and may thence with great
 probability infer, that no other *descent* of our Saviour
into hell, beside his death and burial, was by him
 understood, or delivered in his catechetical discourses
 and preachings as a point of faith; so that what is
 objected as an inconvenience, proves no small ad-
 vantage to this exposition. But I say further, to
 the main question, that,

2. Interpreting *hell* for the mansion, or habitation
 of souls departed hence, (to omit, that *sheol*, as I
 before noted, seems to signify otherwise in the Old
 Testament, and consequently thence the place in

Εἰς ὃ πάντες
 αἰσθάνονται κα-
 θέσθαι εἰς δο-
 χίον ἐνθάδε
 τὰς ψυχὰς
 μετατίστα-
 θαι. Greg.
 Nyss. de Im.
 an.
 μεταβάσεις
 εἰς τὸ αὐτὸς
 καὶ ἀφανίς.
 Id.

the Acts applied out of the Psalms would not be
 proper to this purpose; whereby the main ground
 and support of the assertion itself, taken according
 to this sense, were removed; waving, I say, that
 consideration, and taking ᾠδης, according to the
 meaning which we must confess it sometime to bear
 in the New Testament, yet,) there seems to follow
 some inconvenience thereon. For then we must

either take it for the place of damned spirits, shut up in torment or despair, according to which ac-SERM. XXVIII.

ception the proposition itself would be most certainly uncertain, having no solid ground for it; and most probably false, for that it is affirmed, our Saviour's soul, the same day he died, did go into paradise;

This day, said he to the penitent thief, *shalt thou be with me in paradise,*) or we must take it for a place^{43.}Luke xxiii.

common to all souls, as well good and blessed, as bad and miserable; (for that it in the New Testament at least comprehends the place of torment, is evident by the parable of the rich man and Lazarus.)

But I think that St. Austin had reason to doubt, whether it were consonant to the style of the New Testament, that *hades*, relating to the state of souls, should there be ever taken in a good or middle sense, at least, whereas it is said in the Revelation, that those two inseparable companions, *death* and *hades*, (that *hades*, which is said to render up its^{14.}Rev. xx.

dead to judgment,) *were cast into the lake of fire*, it is hard to suppose that *paradise* was cast in there; yea hard it were to say, that *hades* was cast in thither, supposing that word did then in its usual latitude of signification (as Christians understood it) comprehend *paradise*. Yea further, this explication forces us upon this inconvenience, that we must suppose paradise to be seated in a place beneath us, or within the earth; that paradise, which is either the same with the third (or highest) heavens in St.

Paul, or confining thereto; it is, I say, hard to be forced by an interpretation of these words, to consent, that paradise (that *locus divinæ amœnitatis recipiendis sanctorum spiritibus destinatus; the place of divine comfort and amenity, destined to*^{2 Cor. xii.}
Οὐτε γὰρ ἐν ὑποχθονίαις ἵσταται τις εὖ τὸν παράδεισον, οὐτε ἐν παράδεισῳ τὰ ὑποχθόνια, &c.

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XXVIII.

receive the spirits of the saints) should have its place in the darksome bowels of the earth; no commodious situation, it seems, for a garden, for delightful walks and bowers: yet so it must be seated, that our Saviour's soul may (at least in rigour and propriety of speech) be said to descend thereinto. The word *descend*, taking *hell* for the ancient *sheol*, is proper enough, and hath ground both in authentic use and the nature of the thing; but taking *hell* in this sense, (for the place of souls,) it is most probably improper, and hath no certain ground or authority to commend it; for it is said, that our Saviour's soul was in hell, not that it descended thither; nor can it by consequence be inferred so to have done, according to this meaning of *hell*. However,

3. I add, that seeing it is a most certain truth, that our Saviour's soul did immediately go into the place appointed to receive happy souls after their recession from the body, and resignation into God's hands; if we take *hell* in a general and common sense for the place, or the state of souls departed; and descending for passing thereinto, (by a falling, as it were, from life, or by going away together with the descent of the body; and thence styled descending; what appeareth visibly happening to the body being accommodated to the soul;) if, I say, we do thus interpret our Saviour's *descent into hell*, for his soul's going into the common receptacle and mansion of souls, we shall so doing be sure not substantially to mistake. And this sense, I conceive, if the words can handsomely bear it, would be very proper to this place, as signifying somewhat distinct from what is otherwise expressed, and serving to

the further establishment of those great articles ad-joining, our Lord's *death* and *resurrection*; it implying the perfect accomplishment of death, for the soul to have deserted the body, and to have been translated into that *ἀδύνατον ἄδην*, (as the book of Wisdom calls it,) that *invisible region*, so far distant hence, whence—*revocare gradum superasque evadere ad auras*, is a labour indeed, and a work not to be effected, but by the power of him whose prerogative it is, *to kill, and make alive; to bring down to hell, and to bring up; to lead unto the gates of hell, and to bring back again.*

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Wisd. xvii.
14.

1 Sam. ii. 6.
Deut. xxxii.
39.
Tob. xiii. 2.
Wisd. xvi.

This is all that I shall say about this intricate point; for I cannot well be at the pain to consider or examine those conceits, which pretend to acquaint us why and to what effect our Saviour descended into hell.

That our Lord went thither to preach unto, convert, and redeem from thence all, or some of the damned souls; (for some say, that he depopulated and emptied that region of darkness; others are not so liberal as to free all thence, but only the fitter objects of compassion and favour; both saying that which hath very weak or no reasons to maintain, very strong and plain objections to assail it.)

Iren. iv. 45.
v. 31.
Euseb. Hist.
i. ult.
Clem. Str.
ii. p. 163.
vi. p. 271.
Euseb. Demonst. x. 8.
Athan.
Cont. Apollin.

That he went to rescue and conduct into glory the souls of the patriarchs, and other good persons, from that infernal *limbus*, in which till then they were detained, (a place by no likely means to be proved existent elsewhere than in the fancy of its inventors;) or, that he went to deliver the souls of the just, and prophets, from the wicked powers, into whose power they had fallen, (as Justin Martyr in his Dialogue with Tryphon, p. 105.)

SERM.
XXVIII.

Vid. Montac. Orig.
Part. Post.
p. 442. et in
Appar. I.

That he went to affront, triumph over, and terrify the powers of darkness upon their own ground, or in their own dominions.

Heb. ii. 14.
Coloss. ii.
15.

• Bellarm.

These and the like conceits seem enough discountenanced by saying, the scriptures nowhere plainly declare any such thing, and that therefore they have no good ground to stand upon, (they pretend only one or two difficult and obscure places in the First Epistle of St. Peter, which are capable of fair expositions not favourable to them;) whereas in teaching us, that our Lord preached upon earth salvation to them, who in this life should be converted to believe upon him and obey his laws; damnation irrecoverable to them, who should persist in infidelity and disobedience: that he merited by his obedience, and purchased by his blood, both a redemption from all future distress and a translation into bliss; that he by his death vanquished all the powers of hell, and triumphed over them upon the cross; in these things the scripture is very clear and copious: but concerning that redemption of souls beneath, that translation of souls out of subterraneous closets, or * prisons, (as they call them,) that local triumph in the Devil's kingdom, it is quite silent, or very dark in expression about them; whence we may well be somewhat backward in yielding assent to such devices, of which, if any perhaps should be true, yet could not the belief thereof be of necessity, or great importance to us: for what our Saviour so did below would not belong to the salvation of the living, which is abundantly provided for by his death and resurrection, with what followed them, nor would it much refer to our practice, which is otherwise sufficiently directed

and encouraged. So that we may however safely
be ignorant in regard to any of those notions. But
let it suffice to have discoursed thus far about
this endless question; except we will end it with
that saying of St. Austin; *Melius est dubitare de*
occultis, quam litigare de incertis: or with that
more peremptory saying of Calvin; *Atqui stultum*
et temerarium est de rebus incognitis altius inqui-
rere, quam Deus nobis scire permittit.

SERM.
XXVIII.Vid. Fidei
Symbola in
Codice Jus-
tinian. Tit.
1. De Gen.
ad lit. viii.
5.
Calv. Inst.
iii. 25, 6.

He rose again from the Dead.

SERMON XXIX.

ACTS i. 3.

To whom also he shewed himself alive after his passion by many infallible proofs, being seen of them forty days, and speaking of the things pertaining to the kingdom of God.

SERM. XXIX. **T**HE most proper and most usual way of God, in confirming any truth of high moment in special manner revealed by him, is by lending unto them whom he employs as messengers thereof his powerful arm, for the performance of works supernatural or miraculous. Of such works there is none more certainly such, than raising a dead person to life; the doing which upon several accounts plainly surpasseth the power of any creature; not only as exceeding the ordinary law and course of nature established and upheld by God, but for that the souls of men departing hence do return into God's hand, or into a state by high sentence determined, whence no creature is able to fetch them down, or raise them up; because also God hath reserved the prerogative of doing this unto himself; he *holding* (as it is expressed in the Revelation) *the keys of hell and of death*; he having said, *I am he, and there is no God beside me; I kill, and I make alive.*

Rev i. 18.
Deut. xxxii.
39.
1 Sam. ii. 6.
Psal. lxviii.
20.

There could also particularly be no more proper way of confirming our religion to come from God,

whether we consider the persons whom it was de- SERM.
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signed for, or the doctrines it propounded. The
Jews were incapable of conviction by any other way
than by miracle ; no other reason would have been
apprehended by them, or would have had any force
upon them : *The Jews*, saith St. Paul, *require a* 2 Cor. i. 22.
sign ; and, *Except ye see signs and wonders, ye* John iv. 48.
will not believe, said our Saviour to them. The
Gentiles also had been so used to the winding off
and on the subtilties and the plausibilities of disputa-
tion, that nothing probably in that kind would have
sufficed to persuade them ; and therefore somewhat
miraculous in the highest kind might be needful to
convert them : also the most peculiar and eminent
doctrines of our religion (such as are, *Our Lord*
Jesus being the Messias, the Son of God, and Sa-
viour of the world ; the future resurrection, gene-
ral judgment, and dispensation of rewards, answer-
able to men's practice in this life) cannot more im-
mediately and directly be assured, than by the re-
surrection from the dead of him who principally did
reveal them.

Wherefore Almighty God in confirmation of our
religion did perform this great work in raising Jesus
our Lord from the dead ; and withal (for the con-
viction of the world, for rendering our faith reason-
able and our infidelity inexcusable) he did take espe-
cial care, that the fact should by very sufficient testi-
mony be conveyed unto us ; to which purpose he
did, as St. Peter saith, προχειροτονεῖν, predesign, pick Acts x. 41.
out, and appoint a competent number of persons, in
all respects capable and fit to assert it : thus is that
which St. Luke in our text doth in way of historical
narration affirm. And because the truth thereof is

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in its kind the principal argument, whereby the truth of our religion in gross may be evinced, we shall for the confirmation of our faith against all impressions of this incredulous (and therefore impious) age, endeavour by God's assistance now to declare and maintain it. That Jesus truly died, all the world could testify ; no death was ever more solemn or remarkable ; nor do any adversaries contest it ; that he after that death was by divine power raised again to life is that which we believe and assert. Now whoever with reason shall doubt thereof or deny it, must do it, either because of some repugnance in the fact itself, implying that it could not well be done ; or from deficiency of the testimony proving it, as to its authors or circumstances : but neither of these exceptions may reasonably be admitted.

As for the fact itself, or the notion of a resurrection in general, there cannot, (admitting that, which, as capable of antedecedaneous proof, and as acknowledged by all persons owning any religion, may be presupposed, the power and providence of God, together with his chief attributes of wisdom and goodness incomprehensible,) there cannot be any repugnance therein, or any incredibility. For it was neither in its nature impossible to God, or in its design unworthy of him ; it contained nothing apparently either beyond the power of God, or presumable to be against his will.

1. To raise a dead man to life, is indeed, we confess and avow, a work surpassing the power of any creature not assisted by God ; but no reason can be assigned, why it should go beyond the divine power. The doing it doth not involve contradiction, and is therefore an object of power, and at least is achiev-

able by Omnipotence: let the soul be what it will, SERM.
XXIX.
and in whatever life may be supposed to consist, nothing can hinder that God may reduce the parts of a man into the same state they sometime before were in. And very easily it is conceivable, that he who (according to the general notions and current traditions of mankind) did first inspire the soul of man into his body, may reinfuse it being separated; that he who after death keepeth it in his hand, may thence restore it; who also (according to histories received in all the principal religions that have been in the world) hath often actually performed it. Pliny indeed doth reckon this among instances of things absolutely impossible; *“It is, saith he, a great solace of our imperfect nature, that even God cannot do all things; for neither can he bring death upon himself, if he would, nor bestow eternity on mortals, nor recall the dead to life: but it is no wonder, that he, who thought the soul quite to perish by death, should conceive the restitution thereof impossible; although even supposing that, his opinion was not reasonable; for even any thing, how corruptible soever by dissolution of its ingredients, or alteration of its temperament, may, by recollecting and rejoining those ingredients, or by reestablishing the causes of such a temperament, be restored, (as a house whose materials are dispersed may be reedified, or as a liquor by a new fermentation may be revived;) which to effect may not be deemed hard to him that made the whole world: however to such*

** Imperfectæ vero in homine naturæ præcipua solatia sunt, ne Denm quidem posse omnia; nam neque sibi potest mortem consciscere si velit, (quod homini dedit optimum in tantis vitæ malis) nec mortales æternitate donare, nec revocare defunctos. Plin. ii. 7.*

SERM. as him we may say, as our Saviour did to the Sad-
 XXIX. ducees, *Ye err, not knowing the scriptures, nor the*
 Jer. xxxii. *power of God.* Especially to those who acknow-
 17. ledge the immortality of the soul, or its permanence
 Matt. xxii. in a separate state, and who admit the truth of the
 29. ancient histories among the Jews, it is not only most
 evidently possible, but very credible, that God upon
 Acts xxvi. such St. Paul might well thus expostulate; *What?*
 8. *doth it seem incredible to you, that God should*
raise the dead? to you that have such previous
 notions and persuasions about God's omnipotency;
 (such as the prophet Jeremiah expresseth when he
 Jer. xxxii. saith, *Ah Lord God! behold, thou hast made the*
 17. *heaven and the earth by thy great power and*
 Zech. viii. *stretched-out arm, and there is nothing too hard*
 6. *for thee :)* to you who avow God to be the *Father*
 Job xlii. 2. *of spirits, who formeth the spirit of man within*
 Heb. xii. 9. *him, and that when man dieth, his spirit returneth*
 Num. xvi. *to God who gave it:* to you who believe that our
 22. xxvii. souls are spiritual substances, like unto angels, sub-
 16. sisting after death, and destined to future rewards:
 Zech. xii. 1. to you, in fine, who may in your holy records find
 Isa. lvii. 16. so many experiments of this power exerted by God
 Eccles. xii. in his prophets; such as that of Elias's restoring the
 1. widow of Sarepta's son; of Elisha raising the son of
 1 Kings xvii. 21. the Shunamite; that of the dead man reviving when
 2 Kings iv. his body touched the prophet's bones: to you there-
 35. xiii. 21. fore this fact cannot be in itself incredible; nor in-
 deed can it, for the reason suggested, to any man
 reasonably seem impossible.

2. Nor was it apparently in its design unworthy
 of God, or inconsistent with his holy will: for the
 ends thereof (such as were pretended by the at-

testers of it) were, as very great and important, so **SERM.**
most good and reasonable ; it aimed at no slight or **XXIX.**
trifling matter, but such as in appearance highly
concerned the glory of God, and conduced to the
welfare of mankind ; it professing itself to be a
credential of the greatest embassy that ever came
down from heaven to men, importing the complete
revelation of God's will and procurement of salvation
to the world ; and did therefore in that respect well
become the wisdom and goodness of God to use it.
It pretended to confirm a doctrine containing most
true and worthy representations of God, the best
that could be ; declaring most gracious intentions in
God of mercy and kindness toward men ; no less
proper for him than grateful and needful for us ;
prescribing most excellent rules and patterns of life,
(wherein the most genuine piety and virtue, most
exact justice and hearty charity, most strict purity
and sobriety are prescribed,) yielding the most effec-
tual helps to the practice of all goodness, and ten-
dering the best encouragement thereto ; and upon
this account therefore also most worthy of God. So
that indeed God could not be conceived to perform
such a miracle to better purpose, than for promoting
the designs it pretendeth, being so very great, and
so very good : it could not be improper for the Di-
vine power to be thus exerted in favour of a religion
so apt to promote his glory, and to procure our be-
nefit.

If it be said, that it is absurd or improbable that
God should choose to perform this miracle upon a
person of this sort ; one so mean and obscure in the
state of his life, so wretched and infamous for the
manner of his death ; that God rather should have

SERM. chosen for the interpreter of his mind, and minister
 XXIX. of his purposes, a personage more illustrious in rank,
 and clear in repute ; I answer, first, that our shallow
 fancy is a bad and incompetent judge of what is
 reasonable or absurd, convenient or unfit, in such
 cases, touching the counsels of God ; *who seeth not*
as man seeth ; whose thoughts are not as our
thoughts, nor ways as our ways ; whose folly is
wiser than men, (that is, whose counsels, however
 seeming strange to our dim apprehensions, do yet
 far excel the results of our best wisdom ;) before
 whom, *whatever is high among men is abominable ;*
with whom the wisdom of this world is folly ; whose
judgments are unsearchable, and his ways are past
finding out ; as the holy scriptures teach us ; and as
 good reason, considering the vast distance between
 God and us, must acknowledge: so that no such ap-
 pearance of incongruity can bottom a good exception
 against this, or any such matter, otherwise well at-
 tested. I say further, that God's choice herein, be-
 ing weighed by a pure and well disposed mind, will
 appear upon many accounts full of admirable reason
 and wisdom ; all the divine economy concerning our
 Lord, being rightly apprehended, will soon appear
 wisdom to the perfect, and will be justified by the
 children of wisdom ; as that wherein God's trans-
 cendent goodness, and perfect justice, and glorious
 power are with greatest advantage displayed ;
 whereby the hearts of men are most sweetly com-
 forted under their sense of sin and fear of misery,
 their minds are most clearly instructed in the ways
 of duty and happiness, their affections are most
 strongly excited and encouraged to the practice of
 all goodness : to such purposes (for causes which,

were it now seasonable, we could produce) our Sa- SERM.
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viour's low condition and hard circumstances did
admirably serve; and therefore upon that score it
could not be unlikely that God should raise him
from the dead.

3. But neither (which is the most considerable point) is the testimony asserting this fact anywise defective or insufficient, but hath all the conditions imaginably requisite to the most entire assurance of any such matter. The defect in the testimony, if any be, must arise from weakness or from wilfulness in the witnesses, (their want of knowledge or mistake, their want of honesty or their unfaithfulness,) or from some circumstances belonging to their persons, or their testimony, able to invalidate their attestation; but none of these things can with reason be supposed; they were in all respects more than competently qualified to attest, and all considerable circumstances do assist in confirming their attestation; as by weighing the considerations following may appear.

1. As for their number, it was not one or two persons, (although one or two ordinarily do suffice for decision of the greatest cases among men,) but many who conspired in asserting it. *He was* (saith St. 1 Cor. xv.
Paul, one who was conversant with these witnesses, ^{5, 6.}
who, of a zealous adversary and fierce persecutor of this testimony, did become an earnest avoucher thereof) *seen of Cephas, then of the twelve: after, he was seen of above five hundred brethren at once; of whom the greater part remain unto this present.* And, *This Jesus*, say the twelve apostles, Acts ii. 14,
hath God raised up, whereof all we are witnesses: 32. v. 32.
i. 22. x. 39.
twelve there were who principally were designed,

SERM. and did take it for their especial duty to attest this
 XXIX. matter, beside many others, who in their order were
 able and ready to do it.

2. These witnesses were no strangers to Jesus, but persons by long conversation most familiarly acquainted with him; *who had* (as it is said, and John xv. 27. as it was notorious) *been with him from the beginning, who went out and in with him all the time* (that is, for three years' space) *from his baptism to his ascension.* Acts i. 21, 22.

3. They did aver themselves to be *αὐτόπτας τοῦ λόγου*, or *ἀντηκόους*, eye or ear-witnesses of the matter, as fully informed about it as senses could make them; *We cannot but speak what we have heard* Acts iv. 20. *and seen: What we did see with our eyes, and what our hands did handle of the word of life, that we report unto you;* so St. John (the beloved disciple, who constantly attended on his dear Master) expresseth his testimony: and, *We have not followed cunningly devised fables, when we made known unto you the power and presence of our Lord Jesus Christ, but were eyewitnesses of his majesty;* so St. Peter affirmeth concerning the manner of their testifying these matters. They did, I say, hear and see him, and that with all advantage possible or needful, not once or twice, not in passing, or at distance, not in way of glimpse or rumour; but often, for a good time, thoroughly; many days conversing and interchanging discourses with him; *who, as St. Peter in the name of the rest saith, did eat and drink with him after that he rose from the dead:* and, *To whom,* as St. Luke, their companion, from their mouth in our text saith, *also he shewed himself alive after his passion by many infallible* 1 John i. 1. 2 Pet. i. 16. Acts x. 41. Acts i. 3.

proofs, being seen of them forty days, and speaking SERM.
of the things pertaining to the kingdom of God: XXIX.

and, *He was*, saith St. Paul, another familiar of Acts xiii.
theirs, *seen many days of them which came up with* ^{31.}
him from Galilee to Jerusalem, who are his wit-
nesses to the people. And two of these witnesses,
St. John and St. Matthew, are in writings extant re-
laters of passages occurring in their conversation
with him, very many, very sensible as can be.

4. We may also consider, that the chief of these
witnesses, the apostles themselves, were at first (as
St. Luke of them and from them confesseth) so far
from being easy or credulous in regard to this mat-
ter, that, hearing it from others, who before had seen
our Lord risen, they took it for a trifle, or a fiction,
and gave no credence thereto: *their words*, saith Luke xxiv.
the text, *ἐφάρησαν ὡσεὶ λῆρος*, *did seem to them (a toy,* ^{II.}
or) an idle tale, and they believed them not. Yea, Matth.
some of them would hardly confide in their own eyes, ^{xxviii. 17.}
nor would yield assent unto the fact appearing to
them, until, by letting them touch him, and shewing
them the marks of his crucifixion remaining on his
body, he demonstrated himself to be the very same
person who had lived with them and died before
them; *They were terrified and affrighted, and* Luke xxiv.
supposed they had seen a spirit—and while they ^{37, 41.}
yet believed not for joy, and wondered, &c. are John xx.
^{27.}
words in the history.

5. Upon these grounds, as they professed, they
did, without any mincing, hesitancy, or reservation,
in the most full, clear, downright, and peremptory
manner, with firm confidence and alacrity, concur-
rently aver the fact; *They spake the word of God* Acts iv. 31.
with boldness—and with great power gave the ^{33. xiv. 3.}

SERM. *apostles witness of the resurrection of the Lord*
 XXIX. *Jesus.*

Ἡμεῖς τι-
 στεύομεν, διὰ
 καὶ λαλοῦ-
 μεν.
 2 Cor. iv.
 13.

Which things being weighed, it will appear impossible that the attesters of this fact (supposing them in their wits and senses; and certainly they were so, as presently we shall shew, and as the thing itself plainly speaks) could not be ignorant therein, or mistaken about it. For if all the senses of so many persons in a matter so grossly sensible, so often, and for such a continuance of time, can be distrusted; if the apostles could imagine they saw their Friend and Master, whom they so long had waited upon, when they did not see him; that they heard him making long discourses with them, when they did not hear him; that they did walk, eat, and drink with him, did touch and feel him, when there was really no such thing; what assurance can we have of any thing most sensible? what testimony can be of any validity or use? On that hand, therefore, the testimony is impregnable, the witnesses cannot be accounted ignorant or mistaken in the case; for number, or for ability, they cannot be excepted against.

It must be therefore only their seriousness, honesty, or fidelity, that remains questionable in them; they must be said to have wilfully deceived and imposed upon the world; self-condemned hypocrites, impudent liars, and egregious impostors they must have been, if their testimony was false: but that they were not such persons, that they could not, and would not do so, there are inducements to believe, as forcible as can be required, or well imagined, in any such case.

1. They were persons who did (with denumcia-

tion of most heavy judgments from God on the contrary practices) preach and press constantly and earnestly all kinds of goodness, veracity, and sincerity, together with humility, modesty, ingenuity, and equity, as main points of that religion, which they by this testimony confirmed. All their discourses plainly breathed a most serious and sprightly goodness and charity toward men, very inconsistent with a base plot to delude them; their doctrine utterly condemned all malice, all falsehood, craft, and hypocrisy, detruding into the bottomless pit all *that love or make a lie*. Consider these sayings and rules of theirs: *As we have opportunity, let us do good unto all men: Let your moderation (or equity) be known to all men: Shew all meekness to all men: Laying aside all malice, and all guile, and hypocrisies, and envies, and evil speakings, as new-born babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby: Putting aside all lying, speak every man truth with his neighbour: Lie not one to another, seeing ye have put off the old man with his deeds: Brethren, be not children in understanding: however in malice be ye children, but in understanding be perfect men.* Such were their precepts, discountenancing all malice and all fraud; propounded in a manner as serious and grave and simple as can be imagined; all the tenor of their doctrine consenting to them: wherein also they earnestly declare against and prohibit all vanity of mind and perverseness of humour; all affectations of novelty and singularity; all peevish factiousness and turbulency; all fond credulity, stupidity, and precipitancy; all instability and giddiness of mind;

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Rev. xxii.
15. xxi. 27.

Gal. vi. 10.

Phil. iv. 5.

Tit. iii. 2.

1 Pet. ii. 1.

Eph. iv. 25.

Col. iii. 9.

1 Cor. xiv.

20.
Tit. ii. 7, 8.

SERM. all such qualities, which dispose men without most
 XXIX. sure and evident grounds either to introduce or to embrace any new conceits, practices, or stories: such was their discourse, nowise sounding like the language of impostors; deceit could hardly so disguise or so thwart and supplant itself.

2. Their practice was answerable to their doctrine, exemplary in all sorts of virtue, goodness, and sincerity; such indeed whereby they did in effect conciliate much respect and authority to their words:

¹ *Thess. ii. 10.* *Ye are witnesses*, (they could, appealing to the observers of their demeanour, and to the all-knowing God, say,) *and God also, how holily, and justly, and unblameably we behaved ourselves among you that believe*: and, *We have renounced the hidden*
² *Cor. iv. 2.* ^{6.} ^{ii. 17.} *things of dishonesty, not walking in craftiness, nor handling the word of God deceitfully; but by manifestation of the truth commending ourselves to every man's conscience in the sight of God.* Such a lively sense of goodness shining forth in a long course of practice; so to bridle appetites, so to moderate passions, so to eschew all the allurements of pleasure, profit, and honour; to bear adversities so calmly and sweetly; to express so much tender kindness and meekness toward all men; to be continually employed in heavenly discourses and pious works; exhorting men by word, leading them by example, to all sorts of goodness indisputably such: to live thus, long and constantly, doth nowise suit unto persons utterly debauched in mind, and of a profligate conscience; who had devised, and did then earnestly drive on the propagation of a vile cheat. The life, I say, they led was not the life of

vicked impostors, but worthy of the divinest men ; SERM.
it to countenance and carry on the best design, such XXIX.
as they pretended theirs to be.

3. Further, they were persons of good sense ; yea,
very wise and prudent ; not in way of worldly or
fleshly wisdom ; in skill to contrive or compass pro- 1 Cor. i. 20.
jects of gain, honour, or pleasure to themselves ; to ii. 5, 6.
the commendation of them and of their testimony, 2 Cor. i. 12.
they disclaimed being wise or skilful that way, xi. 6.
having no practice therein, nor caring for it ; (for
they looked not much on things temporal and trans- 2 Cor. iv.
tory ; they did not mind earthly things ; they had 18.
not their conversation, or interest, here, but *above,* Col. iii. 2.
as citizens of another world, deeming themselves as Phil. iii. 20.
not sojourners and pilgrims here ;) but endued 1 Pet. ii. 11.
they were with a wisdom, as in itself far more ex-
cellent, so more suitable to the persons they sustain-
ed ; with great perspicacy and sound judgment in
the matters they discoursed about, and in the af-
airs they pursued : such their writings, according
to acknowledgment of innumerable most wise and 2 Cor. xi. 6.
learned persons, fraught with admirable wisdom 1 Cor. ii. 1,
and heavenly philosophy, (rude indeed and simple 13.
in expression, but most exact and profound in
sense,) do manifest them to have been ; such the
tenor of their doctrine evidenced them, shining with
that lustre and beauty, compacted with that strength
and harmony, that whoever will not confess it to
have proceeded from God, must, upon consideration,
however allow, that it could not have been devised
by idiots or mean persons, but did come from per-
sons of much subtilty and great reach : they must
be no fools who could frame a religion merely by
its own plausibility, without any external help, able

SERM. presently to supplant all the religions in the world;
XXIX. and to stand durably firm upon the foundations laid

Πῶς αὐτὸ
παράβησαν
μαυόμενοι
καὶ ἱεροτε-
λέταις, &c.
Chrys. in
1 Cor. Or.
5. elegan-
tissime.

by them. Such also the notable conduct of their great affair, (notwithstanding so mighty disadvantages and difficulties,) together with the prodigious efficacy their endeavours had upon men, do evince them to have been: they surely could not be weak men, who in a plain and peaceable way confounded all the wit and policy, all the learning and eloquence, all the force and violence that withstood them. Experience did attest to the truth of what St. Paul

Acts vi. 10.
1 Cor. i. 27.
2 Cor. x. 4.

saith; *The weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strong holds; casting down imaginations, and every thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ.*

Vid. Chrys.
ibid.

4. So were they qualified in their minds: it must be further also considered, as to their purposes in this case, that, in falsely venting and urging this testimony, they could not have any design gainful or beneficial to themselves; but must therein to no end be mischievous to themselves and others; abusing others indeed, but far more harming themselves; they must be supposed voluntarily to have embraced all sorts of inconvenience, and designedly to have rendered themselves miserable; courting adversity, choosing naked and barren evil for its own sake:

1 Thess. ii.
3, 5.

For our exhortation was not of deceit, nor of uncleanness, nor in guile: for neither at any time used we flattering words, as ye know, nor a cloke of covetousness; God is witness: neither of men sought we glory. Profit, honour, or pleasure, (those baits which entice men to do evil, and set them upon

vicked attempts,) or any worldly advantage thence SERM.
 to accrue to themselves, they could have no design XXIX.
 upon; for all those things wittingly and willingly
 they did abandon; for the sake of this very testi-
 mony incurring extremities of loss, of disgrace, and
 of pain. They did plainly foresee what entertain-
 ment their testimony would find, and how in prose-
 cution thereof they should be forced to endure all
 kinds of indignity, of damage, and of hardship from
 men; that *in this world they should have tribula-* John xvi.
tion; that men should deliver them up to be af- 33. xv. 20.
flicted, and should kill them; and that they should xvi. 2.
be hated of all nations for his name's sake; their Matt. xxiv.
 Master expressly had forewarned them, that *all who* 9.
would live godlily in Christ Jesus (that is, all pro- Luke xxi.
 fessors of faith in him, especially the teachers there- 12.
 of) *must suffer persecution; and must through* Acts xiv. 22.
much tribulation enter into the kingdom of God; xx. 23.
 that *bonds and imprisonments did abide them in*
every place; that God had set forth the apostles 1 Cor. iv. 9.
as appointed unto death, and exposed them as
spectacles of scorn and obloquy to the world; that
they were called to suffering, and appointed to 1 Pet. ii. 21.
this very thing, as to their office and their portion: 1 Thess. iii.
 these were the rules and measures they went by;
 these the expectations they had from the world: ac-
 cording unto which it did in effect happen to them;
Even to this present hour we both hunger and 1 Cor. iv.
thirst, and are naked, and have no certain dwell- 11, 12, 13.
ingplace; and labour, working with our hands: (2 Cor. iv. 8.)
being reviled, we bless; being persecuted, we suffer
it; being defamed, we entreat: we are made as
the filth of the world, and as the offscouring of all

SERM. *things unto this day.* So doth St. Paul describe the
 XXIX. apostles' condition.

5. All these afflictions, as they knowingly did object themselves to for the sake of this testimony, so they did endure them with contentedness and joy; Acts v. 41. *when they had been beaten, they departed, rejoicing that they were counted worthy to suffer shame*
 1 Pet. iv. 13. *for the name of Jesus; rejoicing that they were made partakers of Christ's sufferings; deeming it*
 Phil. i. 29. *a privilege that was given them, not only to believe in him, but to suffer for his name; thinking them-*
 1 Pet. iv. 14. *selves happy in being reproached for the name of*
 Heb. x. 34. *Christ; taking joyfully the spoiling of their goods;*
 Phil. iii. 9. *counting all things but loss for the excellency of*
 (1 Pet. i. 6. *the knowledge of Jesus Christ their Lord, for*
 Rom. v. 3. *whom they suffered the loss of all things.*
 Jam. i. 2.)

6. Whence it is evident enough, that the satisfaction of their conscience, and expectation of future reward from God for the discharge of their duty herein, was all the argument which did induce them to undertake this attestation, all the reason that could support them in it; neither of which could be consistent with the resolved maintenance of such a falsehood. They could not indeed but grievously be tormented with remorse in their minds, they could not but dread severe vengeance from heaven, had they been conscious to themselves of so villainous a design of mocking God, (whose name and express command they pretended, whose testimony and judgment they appealed to in this affair,) and together
 Acts iv. 10. *of abusing the world with such an imposture. Such*
 v. 20. *must have been their inward sense, and such their*
 1 Cor. ii. 17. *expectations, had they proceeded with guilty con-*
 iv. 2.
 2 Cor. ix.
 10.

science in this business : but they do seriously pro-
 fess otherwise, and the condition of things might as-
 sure us they were in good earnest ; Εἰς τοῦτο, *For*
this end, saith St. Paul, *we both labour and suffer*
reproach, because we trust in the living God, who
is the Saviour of all men, specially of those that
believe : and, *Our rejoicing is this, the testimony*
of our conscience, that in simplicity and godly sin-
cerity, not with fleshly wisdom, but by the grace
of God, we have had our conversation in the world:
and, Knowing the fear of the Lord, (that is, be-
 ing sensible of our duty toward God, and fearful
 of his judgment, if we transgress it,) *we persuade*
men ; but are made manifest unto God. So they
 declare what principle it was that moved them to
 this practice : and the hope encouraging them in
 it they often express : *If, said they, we suffer with*
Christ, we shall be glorified together with him :
and, We always bear about in the body the dying
of the Lord Jesus, that the life also of Jesus may
be made manifest in our body : and, *It is a faithful*
saying, if we are dead with him, we shall also live
with him ; if we suffer with him, we shall also reign
with him ; if we deny him, he also will deny us :
and, I have fought a good fight, I have finished my
course, I have kept the faith ; henceforth there is
laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the
Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that
day. So they profess concerning the grounds and
 reasons of their maintaining this testimony (and the
 points connected therewith) with so great present
 inconvenience to themselves : and the state of things
 rendereth their profession most credible ; for they
 appear not so blind as not to see those inconve-

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1 Tim. iv.
10.

2 Cor. i. 12.

1 Cor. v. 11.

Rom. viii.

17.

2 Cor. iv. 10.

2 Tim. ii. 11.

(1 Pet. i. 7.
iv. 13.)

2 Tim. iv. 8.

SERM. niences, nor so fond as to like them for them-
 XXIX. selves, or upon no considerable account; they con-

1 Cor. xv.
 14, 15, 19,
 30, 31.

fess, that they should be very stupid and senseless people, if they had incurred and underwent all this to no purpose, or without hope of good recompense for it after this life; *If Christ be not risen*, saith St. Paul, *then is our preaching vain, and your faith is also vain; yea, and we are found false witnesses of God, that he raised up Christ;—then we have only hope in this life; and, if in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable.*

Rom. viii.
 35, &c.

7. And how indeed is it conceivable, that such persons should be so bewitched with so passionate an affection, or so mighty a respect, toward a poor dead man, (one, who was born so obscurely, who lived so poorly, who died so miserably and infamously, as a malefactor; who indeed so died to their knowledge most deservedly, supposing they did know their testimony to be false; one who never was capable to oblige them, or to recompense them for their actings and sufferings in any valuable measure,) that merely for his sake, or rather not for his sake, but only for a smoke of vain opinion about him, (which could nowise profit either him or them,) they should with an inflexible obstinacy defy all the world; expose themselves to all the persecutions of the world, and to all the damnations of hell. St. Paul surely had another opinion of Jesus, when he said, *Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword?—Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us: for I am persuaded, that neither death,*

nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, SERM. XXIX.
 nor things present, nor things to come, nor height,
 nor depth, nor any creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord. Could they, think we, speak thus, who knew Jesus to be a wicked deceiver, worthily hated of God and men? No assuredly; their speech and behaviour do palpably shew that therefore they did bear so vehement an affection, and so high a respect toward Jesus, because, as with their mouths Rom. x. 9. they openly professed, so they were in their hearts thoroughly persuaded, that he was the Son of God most dear unto him; who died for their sake; who was to their knowledge raised again; who also, according to his promises, would recompense their faithful adherence to him with eternal joy and bliss.

8. Again, we may consider these witnesses to Vid. Chrys. tom. vi. Or. lxi. p. 61. have of themselves been persons very unlikely to devise such a plot, very unfit to undertake it, very unable to manage and carry it through: persons they were of no reputation for birth, for wealth, for any worldly interest; persons of no education, no improvement, no endowments of mind (natural or artificial) anywise considerable: ^b they were, as to condition and manner of life, fishermen, publicans, and mechanics; as to abilities of mind, they were as they report themselves) ἀγράμματοι καὶ ἰδιῶται, il- Acts iv. 13. illiterate and simple: they were also men of no great natural spirit or courage, but rather irresolute and timorous: as their deserting their Master, their re- Matt. xxvi. 56. John xx. 19.

^b Οὔτε γὰρ λόγων ἰσχυτ, &c. Chrys. tom. v. Or. 64. Τίνι θαρρήσαντες; ἄρα τῷ καλᾷ καὶ τῷ ἀγκίστρῳ, ἢ τῇ σμίλῃ καὶ τῷ τρυπάνῳ, &c. bid.

SERM. nouncing him, their flying and sculking, reported by
 XXIX. themselves, declare: *the base*, or ignoble, the *de-
 1 Cor. i. 27, spicable*, or abject, the *weak*, the *foolish things of*
 28. *the world*, they did style themselves; and in that
 ἰσχυράκινα
 σκίση.
 2 Cor. iv. 7. no adversary will, I suppose, contradict them. And
 is it possible, that a few (in this respect I mean very
 few) persons thus conditioned and qualified, should
 have the wit to contrive, or the courage to maintain
 a forgery of such importance? What hope they
 could frame to themselves of any success therein,
 upon so extreme disadvantages, is to any man very
 obvious^c. No kind of friends in all the world could
 they imagine ready to back them, or yield them any
 encouragement; but heaven, hell, and earth, they
 had reason to expect all to be combined in opposi-
 tion to them and their design: they had all reason
 to fear, that God himself would cross them and blast
 their wicked endeavours to propagate the belief of
 such a lie, which most profanely they dared to father
 on him, and to vent in his name. They could not
 hope the father of lies himself, or any powers of
 darkness, would be favourable or helpful to them;
 whose interest they so manifestly impugned; that
 the success of their doctrine, whether true or false,
 could not but much prejudice their kingdom; as in
 effect we see that it did in a manner quite subvert
 it: they were sure among men to encounter the
 most potent and most earnest adversaries that could
 be; all the grandees of the world, both political and
 religious, deeply concerned in honour and interest
 to labour with all their power the detection of their

^c Καὶ οὐκ ἂν οὕτως εὐτελέσι καὶ ταπεινοῖς πλάσαι τί τοιοῦτον ἐπῆλθέ
 ποτε, πλὴν εἰ μαίνεσθαι τις αὐτοὺς φαίη καὶ παρακαίειν, &c. Ibid. in Ba-
 bylam.

cheat, and overthrow of their design: whence it must be a boldness more than human, more than gigantic, that could bear up against all these adversaries, if their testimony was in their conscience false; against all these oppositions and disadvantages, what could those poor men have to confide in, beside the natural prevalence of truth, and divine assistance thereto; being in their hearts assured of the former, and therefore greatly hoping for the latter?

9. And how indeed could such a cheat, contrived and conducted by so, to human esteem, weak and silly a knot of people, so easily prosper, and obtain so wonderful a progress, so as presently to induce very many persons, μυριάδες πεπιστευκότων, (*myriads of believers*, as it is Acts xxi. 20.) many of them considerable, (even πολὺν ὄχλον ἱερέων, *a great crowd* Acts vi. 7. *and company of priests*, as it is said in the Acts,) to embrace it, together with all the crosses and damages attending it? so as to escape all inquisition about it, and overbear all persecution against it, being neither convincible by proof, nor controllable by force; but in despite of all assaults holding its ground, and running forward with huge success; according to that in the Acts, *So mightily grew the word of God and prevailed.*

10. The matter of their testimony (if we consider what as we should do) and its drift were very implausible, such as no impostors would be likely to forge, and no hearers, without great evidence of truth, would be ready to admit. ^d It was no fine story apt

^d Τί δὲ περὶ αὐτοῦ λέγοντες ἐδόκουν εἶναι πιθανοί; &c. Chrys. in Cor. Or. v.

Si rem credibilem crediderunt, videant quam sint stolidi qui

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to please the lusts, to flatter the humours, or to gratify the fancies of men; but rather very distasteful to flesh and blood, (whose inclinations it mainly thwarted,) likely to offend the ears of all men who should hear it; apt to raise fierce anger and indignation in Jews, great contempt and scorn in Gentiles toward it. The Jews, to whom it was first addressed, it did plainly charge with heinous iniquity and impiety in cruelly murdering a Person most innocent, most excellent in virtue and dignity, most dear to God; it withal defeated their longings for a gaudy Messiah, who should restore and rear them into a lofty state of temporal prosperity, substituting in the room a spiritual King, with overtures of felicity invisible and future, little suiting their gross conceit and carnal gust of things; it also imported the abrogation of those ritual laws, and revolution of those special privileges, wherein they did so please and pride themselves; it opened the enclosures of God's favour and grace, making them common to all people; it crossed their secular interests of emolument and honour annexed to the present outward frame of religion, which it dissolved; it menaced severe vengeance and horrible desolation to their nation and city: and was such a report likely to be entertained by them otherwise than with displeasure and detestation? Neither unto the Gentiles was it likely to be acceptable; for it did also subvert all the religion established among them by law and custom, destroying consequently all the interests of those who were concerned in upholding there-

Vid. Acts
xxii. 21, 22.

non credunt: si autem res incredibilis credita est, etiam hoc utique incredibile est, sic creditum esse quod incredibile est, &c. *Aug. de Civitate Dei*, xxii. 5. Vid. Chrys. tom. vi. Or. 61.

f; such as those who made that famous uproar, *SERM. rying out, Great is Diana of the Ephesians:* XXIX.

It seemed to thwart the common maxims of poli- Acts xix. 28, 34.
y, and dictates of worldly prudence; it could not
not appear, to men prepossessed with admiration of
ecular wealth, power, and glory, a story most ridi-
ulously extravagant, that so pitiful and wretched a
erson, as Jesus seemed in the eye of the world to
ave been, should in this miraculous way be declared
he Son of God and Lord of all things, author of life
nd salvation to all men, sovereign object of all wor-
hip and obedience: such a story therefore it was
ot likely that any men in their senses should con-
pire to forge, should offer to obtrude on the world,
o incapable of it, so averse from embracing it; and
eing such, it were strange that by a general repulse
; should not presently be stifled and quelled^c.

11. One would indeed think that this report, had
; been false, might easily have been disproved and
uashed: they who were mightily concerned, and Acts v. 28.
s eagerly disposed to confute it, wanted no means
f doing it: they were not surprised in the matter;
ut were forewarned of it, and did forebode it com-
ig; they were not drowsy or neglectful, but very
pprehensive, careful and cautious in preventing it,
hat it should not be produced, or, being so, that it
ight be defeated; for to this purpose they caused Matt. xxvii. 64.

^c Εἰ γὰρ καὶ τῶν πραγμάτων ἐκβεβηκότων — ὁμῶς εἰσὶ τινες μετὰ τοσ-
ῖτα τεκμήρια, καὶ τῆς οἰκουμένης, ὡς εἰπεῖν, ἀπάσης τὴν μαρτυρίαν, οἱ δια-
στοῦσι τοῖς γεγενημένοις, καὶ πολλοὶ οὕτως ἀβασανίστως καὶ ἀνεξετάστως,
ς ἂν παρὰ τὴν ἀρχὴν μήτε πράγματα θεασάμενος, μήτε ματυρίας ἀξιοπί-
ους τούτων ἔχων ταύτην ἂν τὴν πίστιν ἐδέξατο ψυχῇ. Chrys. tom. v.
r. 64.

Τίς οὕτως ἐμεμήνει τῶν ταῦτα ἀκούοντων ὡς ψιλοῖς ῥήμασι πιστεῦσαι
ρὶ πραγμάτων τοιούτων; Ibid.

SERM. XXIX. the sepulchre of our Lord to be sealed up, and guarded by soldiers ; that being masters of his body, they might by exhibiting it disprove any report that should be made about his resurrection : they had full opportunity of examining the matter to the bottom ; it being fresh, and presently divulged after its being reported done ; they having also all the power and authority on their side, in furtherance of the discussion of the business : we may accordingly suppose them very zealous, diligent, and active in thoroughly sifting it, and striving to detect the falsehood therein : they did so certainly ; and thereto they added strict prohibitions, fierce menaces, and bloody persecutions toward the suppression thereof ; yet could they not with all their industry confute it, nor by all their fury quell it : Why ? because it was not confutable ; because truth, prosecuted with vigorous integrity and constancy, or rather supported by divine protection and blessing, is invincible. Put case there were now the like fact by so many people reported done within these two months, wherein the church and state were in like manner exceedingly concerned, and should therefore employ all their power and care to discover the truth, one would think it impossible, that, were it an imposture, it should escape detection, and being soon, with the general satisfaction of men, quite blown away and exploded : this is the fate of all falsehood, standing merely upon its own legs, and not propped by worldly power ; but truth, as in the present case, is able to subsist by its own strength, especially Heaven being concerned to aid it^f.

Acts iv. 17,
18. v. 28.

^f Οὐδεμιᾶς γὰρ δεῖται βοηθείας ἢ τῆς ἀληθείας ἰσχὺς, ἀλλὰ καὶ μυρίους ἔχει τοὺς σβεννύντας αὐτήν, οὐ μόνον οὐκ ἀφανίζεται, ἀλλὰ καὶ δι' αὐτῶν

12. As also this testimony had no power to sustain it, so it used no sleight to convey itself into the persuasions of men ; it did not creep in dark corners, it did not grow by clandestine whispers ; it craved no blind faith of men : but with a barefaced confidence it openly proclaimed itself, appealing to the common sense of men, and provoking the world to examine it ; daring all adversaries here to confront it, defying all the powers beneath to withstand it ; claiming only the patronage of heaven to maintain it.

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1 Thess. v.
21.

13. Furthermore, the thing itself, had it been counterfeit, was in all probability apt to fall of itself ; the witnesses clashing together, or relenting for their crime. That advice of Gamaliel had much reason in it ; *Refrain*, said he, *from those men, and let them alone ; for if this counsel or this work be of men, it will come to nought ; καταλυθήσεται*, it will of itself be dissolved or destroyed : for how indeed could it be, that among so many confederates in a juggle, not one, either checked by conscience, or daunted by hazards, or wearied and worn out by sufferings, should flinch and fall off, so as to detect the plot, disavow his fault, and retire from persecution, but that each one should persist steadfast in so high a strain of vile dissimulation ? If one had fallen off, he had certainly spoiled all the plot, opened all men's eyes, and prevented the faith of any one person to the story : and what cement could firmly combine such a pack of men to God, and to all the world, that they should continue invincibly stiff in their faith to one another, and constantly true to so

τῶν ἐπηρεάζειν ἐπιχειρούντων φαιδροτέρα καὶ ὑψηλοτέρα ἄνεισι, &c. Chrys. tom. v. Or. 64.

SERM. XXIX. vain a design, good to no man, worst to themselves? that, I say, twelve such persons, every one for a long time, during their whole life, should persevere immoveable in so extravagant a resolution of lying, so as by no regrets or dissatisfactions from within, no threats, no perils, no troubles or pains from without, to be ever driven out of it, but should die with it in their mouths, yea, rejoice and glory in dying for it; should dying carry it into the presence of God, and dare with it to appear at his judgment, is exceedingly strange and incredible: it must therefore surely be truth alone that could set them on this design, and could uphold them steady in it; so unanimous a consent, so clear a confidence, so firm a resolution, so insuperable a constancy and patience, nothing but a sense of truth could inspire men with, nothing but a perfectly good conscience could sustain. Possible it is, that in matters of speculation and subtilty men upon slender grounds may be peremptorily opinionative, and desperately pertinacious; (this experience sheweth :) but in a matter of this nature, (a matter of plain fact and gross sense,) none can well be imagined (none especially so qualified, in such circumstances, to such purposes can be imagined) to be so wretchedly stupid, or desperately obstinate.

Aug. de
Civ.D.xxii.
5.

14. He then who doubts of the sincerity of these witnesses, or rejects their testimony as incredible, must instead of it admit of divers stranger incredibilities; refusing his faith to one fact, devious from the natural course of things, but very feasible to God; he must thence allow it to many others, repugnant to the nature of man, and to the course of human things; performed without God, yea against him.

Is it credible, that persons otherwise through all SERM.
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their lives strictly blameless and rigidly virtuous, (even in the more heavenly parts of goodness, in humanity, meekness, peaceableness, humility, and patience,) should, against clearest dictates of conscience, peremptorily and perseveringly commit so palpable villainy, as to broach and propagate such an imposture; that they, all whose demeanours and discourses evidently did tend to the advancement of God's glory, and promoting goodness, should so in their hearts utterly defy God and detest goodness; or that persons in a strain incomparably solemn and serious should so plainly teach, so strongly press, so otherwise uniformly practise highest good-will and beneficence toward all men, while they were with all their mind and might striving to gull and abuse men? Is it conceivable, that men, otherwise in all their actions so wise and well advised, (able to manage and to perform so great matters,) should so zealously drive on a most vain and senseless project, with more unwearied industry labouring to maintain and disperse a lie, than any men beside did ever strive in behalf of truth? Is it not marvellous, that men in all respects so impotent, without any arms or aids, should adventure on so high an enterprise, should with so happy success achieve it; that naked weakness should boldly assault, and thoroughly overpower, the greatest might; pure simplicity should contest with and baffle sharpest wit, subtlest policy, and deepest learning; that rude speech (void of strength or ornament) should effectually persuade an uncouth and unpleasant tale, against all the finest and strongest rhetoric in the world? Is it not strange, that a crew of vile and base persons should so inse-

SERM. parably be linked together with no other hands, than
XXIX. deceit and dishonesty ; no truth, no virtue, no common interest helping to combine or contain them together ? Is it to be believed, that men of sense should *gratis*, for no considerable end or advantage, voluntarily embrace and patiently endure all that is distasteful to human nature, freely exposing themselves, they knew not why, only for the sake of a story, to the fury of earth and flames of hell ; eagerly sacrificing their fortunes, credits, lives, and souls themselves, to the ghost of a forlorn wretch and infamous caitiff ? is it not, in fine, prodigious, that so implausible a falsehood upon all greatest disadvantages should encounter, vanquish, and triumph over truth ? These are incredibilities indeed, able to choke any man's faith : yet he that rejects this testimony must swallow and digest them, together with others like them of as hard concoction.

15. To these things we may add, that God himself did signally countenance and ratify this testimony ; not only by conferring on the avowers thereof extraordinary graces, (invincible courage, irresistible wisdom, indefatigable industry, inflexible constancy and patience ; admirable self-denial, meekness, charity, temperance, and all virtues in an eminent degree,) not only further by a wonderful success and blessing bestowed upon their endeavours ; but by enduing them with supernatural gifts, and enabling them to perform miraculous works openly and frequently ; *So that by the hands of the apostles many wonders and signs were done among the people, the Lord giving testimony unto the word of his grace, and granting signs and wonders to be done*

Acts ii. 43.
v. 12 xiv.
3. xix. 11.

Acts iv. 33. *by their hands ; so that with great power gave the*

apostles witness of the resurrection of the Lord Jesus, and great grace was upon them all; (that is, there was a great appearance of the divine favour toward them, and of the divine operation in and by them.) Yielding which kind of attestation was the ancient and usual method of God in authorizing his messengers, and approving the declaration of his mind by them, (the seal, as it were, put to the *letters credential* from heaven;) nor could God afford more convincing signs than these of his approbation to any person or design: that God did thus *συνεπιμαρτυρεῖν attest*, as the Apostle to the Hebrews speak- SERM. XXIX.
Heb. ii. 4.
eth, together with these witnesses, if the apostolical history (bearing in it all the characters of a simple, faithful, and upright narration) did not relate; yet the effect of this testimony, so speedily and easily prevailing every where, would render it highly probable, since in likelihood, no human endeavour, without divine assistance, could accomplish a business so great and difficult: if they did no miracles, τοῦτο μέγιστον σημεῖον, this, as St. Chrysostom says, was the greatest miracle that could be, that such a testimony should without any miracle prevail.

16. Now for conclusion, all these things being considered, it is sufficiently apparent, that this testimony is above all exception; that no matter of fact ever had, or well could have in any considerable respect, a more valid and certain proof: the greatest affairs in the world (concerning the rights and repu-

⁸ Ἀμήχανον γὰρ ἀνθρωπίνην ἰσχὺν δυνηθῆναι τοσαῦτα ποτε. Chrys. in Act. i. 3. Vid. in 1 Cor. Or. v.

Si per apostolos — ista miracula facta esse non credunt, hoc nobis unum grande miraculum est, quod ea terrarum orbis sine ullis miraculis credidit. Aug. de Civ. D. xxii. 5.

SERM. tations, the estates and the lives of men) are decided
XXIX. by testimonies in all regards less weighty; so that to refuse it, is in effect to decline all proof by testimony, to renounce all certainty in human affairs, to remove the grounds of proceeding securely in any business, or administration of justice; to impeach all history of fabulousness, to charge all mankind with insufficiency, or extreme infidelity; (for if these persons were not able, or not honest enough, what men can ever be supposed such; who can by greater arguments assure their ability, or their integrity in reporting any thing?) to thrust God himself away from bearing credible attestation in any case; (for in what case did he ever or can he be conceived to yield an attestation more full or plain, than he did in this? what further can he perform needful to convince men endued with any competency of reason and ingenuity, or to distinguish them from men of contrary disposition, unreasonably and unworthily incredulous?) in fine, to distrust this testimony is therefore in effect to embrace the vanity of the most wanton or wicked sceptic.

Heb. x. 23.
iv. 14.

The use of all is in short this, that we should heartily thank God for so clear and strong an assurance of the truth of our faith; that we therefore firmly embrace it, and steadily persevere therein; that we obey it, and bear fruits worthy thereof in our practice; that so doing we may obtain the blissful rewards which upon those terms it propoundeth and promiseth; that we may all so do, God of his mercy grant, through Jesus Christ our Lord, to whom for ever be all glory and praise.

Now the God of peace, that brought again

from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great Shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant, make us perfect in every good work to do his will, working in us that which is wellpleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ; to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen.

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Heb. xiii.
20, 21.

The third day he rose again, &c.

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LUKE xxiv. 46.

And he said unto them, Thus it is written; and thus it behoved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day.

SERM. XXX. **T**HE words of men leaving this world (as proceeding from a depth of serious concernedness, and influenced by a special providence) are usually attended with great regard, and a kind of veneration: these are such, even the words of our departing Lord: the which therefore deserve and demand our best consideration.

They respect two points of grand importance, the passion and the resurrection of our Lord; of which I shall only now consider the latter, as being most agreeable to the present season: and whereas there be divers particulars observable in them, I shall confine my Discourse to one, being the main point; couched in those words, *thus it behoved*; which import the needfulness and expediency of our Lord's resurrection: of which I shall endeavour first to declare the truth, then to shew the usefulness, by a practical application thereof.

The resurrection of our Lord may appear to have been needful and expedient upon several good accounts.

1. It was needful to illustrate the veracity, wisdom, and providence of God, by making good what he had signified in the ancient scriptures concerning it; either in mystical adumbrations, or by express predictions; understood according to those infallible expositions, which the apostles did receive from the instruction of our Lord, or from illumination of that Spirit which dictated the scriptures: the particular instances, as being obvious, and requiring large discourse, I now forbear to mention.

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2. It was needful in congruity to other events foretold, and in order to the accomplishment of those designs which our Lord was to manage: the whole economy and harmony of the evangelical dispensation, as it is represented by the prophets, doth require it: it was, according to their predictions, designed, that Christ should erect a spiritual kingdom, and administer it for ever, with perfect equity, in great peace and prosperity; that he should in our behalf achieve glorious exploits, subduing all the adversaries of our salvation, (*sin, death, and hell*;) that he should establish a new covenant, upon better promises, of another eternal most happy life, assuring to the embracers thereof an entire reconciliation and acceptance with God; that he should convert the world to faith in God, and observance of his will: in execution of these purposes, it was declared that he should undergo suffering, and be put to death in a most disgraceful and painful manner; it consequently must be supposed, that from such a death he should conspicuously and wonderfully be restored to life; how otherwise could it appear, that he did reign in glory, that he had obtained those great victories, that he had vanquished death, that

SERM. the former curses were voided, God appeased, and

XXX. mankind restored to favour by him? Had the grave swallowed him up, had God *left his soul in hell*, had he rested under the dominion of common mortality, had after his dismal passion no evidence of special favour toward him shone forth; what ground had there been to believe those great things? who would have been persuaded of them? The scripture therefore, which *foretelleth the sufferings of our Lord, and the glories following them*; which saith, that *having drunk of the brook in the way, he should lift up his head*; that *when he had made his soul an offering for sin, he should prolong his days, and the pleasure of the Lord should prosper in his hand*; that *because he had poured out his soul unto death, God would divide him a portion with the great, and he should divide the spoil with the strong*; that *unto him whom man despised, to him whom the nation abhorred, kings should look and arise, princes should worship*; the scripture, I say, foretelling these events, doth consequentially imply the needfulness of his resurrection.

1 Pet. i. 11.
Luke xxiv.
26.
Ps. cx. 1.
Isa. liii. 10,
12.

Isa. xlix. 7.

3. It was requisite in itself; or in respect to the many great ends for which it serveth, and the excellent fruits which it is apt to produce: as will appear by reflecting on those which are suggested in the New Testament.

I pass by its particular usefulness in regard to our Lord's apostles and disciples; its serving to reinforce their faith, and rear their hopes, being staggered by his passion; to comfort them in those sorrowful apprehensions and despondencies of heart, which arose from the frightful events befalling him; to enlighten their minds by more perfect instruction,

removing their ignorance, and reforming their mistakes concerning him and *the things of his kingdom*; to furnish them with instructions and orders requisite for managing the employments committed to them; to arm them by consolatory discourses and gracious promises of support against the difficulties, hazards, and troubles they were to encounter, in the profession and propagation of his doctrine; in fine, by all his admirable deportment with them, and his miraculous departure from them, to confirm them in their faith, and encourage them in their duty: these particular uses, I say, we shall pass over, insisting only upon those more common ends and effects in which ourselves and all Christians are more immediately concerned.

4. A general end of it was the production and corroboration of faith in us concerning all the doctrines of our religion; for that by it the truth of all our Lord's declarations concerning his own person, his offices, his power, his precepts and his promises, (to the highest pitch of conviction and satisfaction,) was assured; it being hardly possible, that any miracle could be greater in itself for confirmation of the whole, or more proper for ascertaining the parts of our religion. But more particularly;

Μάλιστα πάντων—
σημῶν ἰκανὸν καὶ τοὺς ἀναίσχυτοντας πιστοποιεῖν.
Chrys. in Rom. i. 4.

5. First, From it the dignity of our Lord's person and his especial dearness to God (to the voidance of all exceptions and surmises against him) did appear.

If the meanness of his birth and parentage, if the low garb and dim lustre of his life, if the bitter pains and shameful disgraces of his death, (however accompanied with rare qualities shining in him, and wonderful deeds achieved by him,) in persons

SERM. standing at distance, casting superficial glances on
 XXX. things, and judging by external appearances, might
 John vii. 24. breed disadvantageous apprehensions or suspicions concerning him, whether he were indeed, as he pretended, the Son of God, designed by him to be the Saviour of mankind, *the Lord of all things*, the Judge of the world; the wonderful power and signal favour of God demonstrated in his resurrection, served to discuss those mists, and to correct such mistakes, evincing those temporary depressions to have been only dispensations preparatory toward his greater exaltation in dignity and apparent favour with God; *for though*, saith St. Paul, *he was crucified out of weakness, yet he liveth by the power of God*; that is, although in his sufferings the infirmity of our nature assumed by him was discovered, yet by his recovering life the divine power attending him was eminently declared; it was indeed *an excessive grandeur of power, an energy of the might of strength* which God did exert *in the raising of Christ from the dead*, as the apostle labour-eth to express the unexpressible eminency of this miracle; and being so high an instance of power, it was consequently a special mark of favour; God not being lavish of such miracles, or wont to stretch forth his arm in behalf of any person to whom he doth not bear extraordinary regard: the which consequence also, by reflecting on the circumstances and nature of this event, will further appear.

Eph. i. 19.
 ὅτι περιβαλ-
 λον μέγιστον
 τῆς δυνά-
 μως—ἐν ἑ-
 γκά τοῦ
 πρώτου τῆς
 ἰσχύος.

He was persecuted and put to death as a notorious malefactor, and an enemy to God, to true religion, to the common peace, to goodness; and his being delivered up to suffer was an enforcement of that pretence; for his adversaries thence did argue,

that God had disavowed and deserted him; they SERM. XXX. insulted over him, as one in a forlorn condition, *esteeming him*, as the prophets foretold, *stricken*, Isa. liii. 4. *smitten of God, and afflicted*: but God thus, by his Ps. lxxi. 11. xxii. 8. own hand, undoing what they had done against him, did plainly confute their reasonings; did evidence their accusations to be false, and their surmises vain; did, in opposition to their suggestions, approve him a friend and favourite of God, a patron of truth, a maintainer of piety and peace; one meriting, because obtaining, the singular countenance and succour of God.

And if yielding our Lord over to death (which being a total incapacity of enjoying any good, doth signify an extremely bad state) might imply God's displeasure or disregard toward him, (as indeed it did in a sort, he standing in our room to undergo the inflictions of Divine wrath and justice;) then, answerably, restoring him to life (which, as the foundation of enjoying any good, doth represent the best condition) must demonstrate a singular tenderness of affection, with a full approbation and acceptance of his performances: this indeed far more pregnantly doth argue favour, than that could imply displeasure; for that may happen to the best men upon other grounds, this can bear no other than a favourable interpretation.

Further, to give life doth ground that relation which is deepest in nature, and importeth most affection; whence, in the holy style, to raise up to life, is termed to beget; and *the regeneration* is put Acts xiii. 33. for the *resurrection*; so that it being a paternal act, Matt. xix. 28. signifieth a paternal regard; and thence perhaps Rom. i. 4. St. Paul telleth us, that our Lord *was declared, or de-*

SERM. *finis* to be the Son of God, by his resurrection
 XXX. *from the dead.*

6. Secondly, By our Lord's resurrection we may be assured concerning the efficacy of his undertakings for us: for considering it we may not doubt of God's being reconciled to us, of obtaining the pardon of our sins and acceptance of our persons, of receiving all helps conducive to our sanctification, of attaining final happiness, in case we are not on our parts deficient; all those benefits by our Lord's resurrection, as a certain seal, being ratified to us, and in a manner conferred on us.

As God, in the death of our Lord, did manifest his wrath toward us, and execute his justice upon us; so in raising him thence correspondently God did express himself appeased, and his law to be satisfied; as we in his suffering were punished, (*the iniquity of us all being laid upon him,*) so in his resurrection we were acquitted and restored to grace; as Christ did merit the remission of our sins and the acceptance of our persons by his passion, so God did consign them to us in his resurrection; it being that formal act of grace, whereby, having sustained the brunt of God's displeasure, he was solemnly reinstated in favour, and we representatively, or virtually, in him; so that (supposing our due qualifications, and the performances requisite on our parts) we thence become completely justified, having not only a just title to what justification doth import, but a real instatement therein, confirmed by the resurrection of our Saviour; whence *he was*, saith St. Paul, *delivered for our offences, and raised again for our justification*; and, *Who then*, saith Rom. viii. 33, 34. the same apostle, *shall lay any thing to the charge* Rom. iv. 25.

of God's elect? It is God that justifieth: Who is SERM. XXX.
 he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea
 rather, that is risen again: our justification and
 absolution are, ye see, rather ascribed to the resur-
 rection of Christ, than to his death; for that indeed
 his death was a ground of bestowing them, but his
 resurrection did accomplish the collation of them; for
 since, doth the apostle argue, God hath acknowledged
 satisfaction done to his justice, by discharging our
 surety from restraint and from all further prosecu-
 tion; since in a manner so notorious God hath declared
 his favour toward our proxy; what pretence can be
 alleged against us, what suspicion of displeasure can
 remain? Had Christ only died, we should not have
 been condemned, our punishment being already un-
 dergone; yet had we not been fully discharged, with-
 out that express warrant and acquittance which his
 rising doth imply: so again may St. Paul be understood
 to intimate, when he saith, *If Christ be not raised,* 1 Cor. xv. 17.
your faith is vain; ye are yet in your sins: death
 (or that obligation to die, to which we did all for
 our transgressions stand devoted) was *condemned*, Heb. ii. 14.
 and judicially *abolished* by his death; but it was 2 Tim. i. 10.
 executed and expunged in his resurrection; in which Rom. viii. 3. v. 18. vi. 23.
trampling thereon he crushed it to nothing: where-1 Cor. xv. 14.
 fore therein mankind revived, and received *the gift* Morte cal- cata sur- rexit. Hier. Ep. 129.
of immortality; that being a clear pledge and full 1 Cor. v. 21.
 security, that *as in Adam all die, so in Christ shall*
all be made alive: He, saith St. Chrysostom, *by*
his resurrection dissolved the tyranny of death,
and with himself raised up the whole world^a; *By*
the pledge of his resurrection, saith St. Ambrose,

^a Διὰ τῆς ἀναστάσεως τοῦ θανάτου τυραννίδα κατέλυσε. Chrys. Rom. i. 4.

Τὴν οἰκουμένην ἑαυτῷ συνανέστησε. Chrys. tom. v. Or. 84.

SERM. *he loosed the bands of hell^b; Thereby, saith St. XXX. Leo, death received its destruction, and life its beginning^c.* Therein not only the natural body of Christ was raised, but the mystical body also, each member of his church was restored to life, being thoroughly rescued from the bondage of corruption, and translated into a state of immortality; so that *God, saith St. Paul, hath quickened us together with Christ, and raised us together, and made us to sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus.*

Eph. ii. 5, 6.
Rom. viii.
21.

Coloss. ii.
13, 14.

1 Pet. iii.
21.

Hence in our baptism, (wherein justification and a title to eternal life are exhibited to us,) as the death and burial of Christ are symbolically undergone by us; so therein also we do interpretatively rise with him; *Being, saith St. Paul, buried with Christ in baptism, in it we are also raised together with him*; and, *Baptism, St. Peter telleth us, being antitype of the passage through the flood, doth save us by the resurrection of Christ*, presented therein.

Eph. ii. 10.
Rev. xx. 6.
Acts iii. 26.

It also ministreth hopes of spiritual aid, sufficient for the sanctification of our hearts and lives; for that he who raised our Lord from a natural death, thence doth appear both able and willing to raise us from a spiritual death, or from that mortal slumber in trespasses and sins in which naturally we do lie buried, *to walk in that newness of life to which the gospel calleth us*; and in regard to which, *God, saith St. Peter, having raised his Son Jesus, sent him to bless us, in turning every one of us from his iniquities.*

The same consequently is a sure earnest of our

^b Dominus suæ resurrectionis pignore vincula solvit inferni, &c. *Ambr. ad Grat.*

^c Per resurrectionem Christi et mors interitum, et vita accepit initium. *Leo M. Ep. 81.*

salvation ; for, *If, saith St. Paul, when we were enemies we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son ; much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life.* SERM. XXX.
Rom. v. 10.
1 Pet. iii.
21.

7. Thirdly, By our Lord's resurrection, the verity of his doctrines and the validity of his promises concerning the future state of men are demonstrated, in a way most cogent and most pertinent : any miracle, notoriously true, doth indeed suffice to confirm any point of good doctrine ; but a miracle in kind, or involving the matter contested, hath a peculiar efficacy to that purpose : so did our Lord's resurrection, in way of palpable instance, with all possible evidence to sense, directly prove the possibility of our resurrection, together with all points of doctrine coherent thereto ; (the substantial distinction of our soul from the body, its separate existence after the dissolution, and consequently its immortal nature, God's wise and just providence over human affairs in this state, the scrutiny and judgment of our actions hereafter, with dispensation of recompenses answerable ;) those fundamental ingredients of all religion, most powerful incentives to virtue, and most effectual discouragements from vice ; the which, (before much liable to doubt and dispute, little seen in the darkness of natural reason, and greatly clouded in the uncertainty of common tradition,) as our Lord by his doctrine first brought into clear light, so by his resurrection he fully did shew that light to be sincere and certain. 2 Tim. i. 10.
Acts xxvi.
23.

Infinitely weak and unsatisfactory were all the arguments which the most careful speculation could produce, for asserting those important verities, in comparison to that one sensible experiment attesting to

SERM. them : for if our Lord, a man as ourselves, did arise
 XXX. from the dead, (his soul, which from the cross descended into the invisible mansions, returning into his body,) then evidently our souls are distinct from our bodies, and capable of subsistence by themselves; then are they apt to exist perpetually ; then may they be put to render an account for what is acted here, and accordingly may be dealt with. Hence may we see, that St. Paul discoursed reasonably, when he told the Athenians, that, *Now God hath appointed a day, in which he will judge the world in righteousness, by the man whom he hath ordained*, *πίστιν παρὰσχὼν πᾶσιν*, *exhibiting an argument most persuasive to all, having raised him from the dead*; that St. Peter also might well aver, that *God hath regenerated us to a lively hope of an incorruptible inheritance, reserved in heaven for us, by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead*.

Acts xvii.
31.

1 Pet. i. 3,
4.

Rev. i. 5.

Colos. i. 18.

1 Cor. xv.

20.

Acts iii. 15.

v. 31.

Heb. vi. 20.

1 Cor. xv.

23.

Luke xx.

36.

Rom. viii.

11.

Particularly the resurrection of our bodies, restoring our perfect manhood to us, (a point wholly new to the world, which no religion had embraced, no reason could descry,) was hereby so exemplified, that considering it, we can hardly be tempted to doubt of what the gospel teacheth about it; that he, preceding as the *firstborn from the dead*, and the *first-fruits of them which sleep*, as our forerunner, and the *Captain of life*; we, *ἐν ἰδίῳ τάγματι*, in our *due rank* and season, as *younger sons of the resurrection*, as serving under his command and conduct, in resemblance and conformity to him, shall follow; so that, *If*

¶ Credentes resurrectionem Christi, in nostram quoque credimus, propter quos et ille obiit et resurrexit. *Tert. de Pat. 9.*

Resurrectionem carnis per semetipsum primus initiavit. *Cyp. Ep. 73.*

the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwelleth in us, he that raised up Jesus from the dead shall also quicken our mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in us ; that, If we have been planted with him in the likeness of his death, we shall also grow up in the likeness of his resurrection ; that, As we have borne the image of the earthly man, so we shall also bear the image of the heavenly ; so that God, who raised our Lord, shall also raise us by his power ; for we cannot but allow that consequence to be reasonable, which St. Paul doth imply, when he saith, If we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep through Jesus will God bring with him, reducing them into a state conformable to his, by reunion of their body and soul.

8. Fourthly, It was a designed consequence of our Lord's resurrection, that he thereby should acquire a just dominion over us ; for *to this end*, saith St. Paul, *Christ both died, and rose, and revived, that he might be the Lord both of the dead and living :* by the obedience of his death he did earn that dominion, as a worthy recompense thereof ; *He did by his blood purchase us* to be his subjects and servants : but from his resurrection he began to possess that reward, and to enjoy his purchase ; it being the first step of his advancement to that royal dignity and *preeminence over all flesh* ; to which, in regard to his sufferings, God did exalt him ; concerning which, before his ascension, he said to his disciples, *All power is given me in heaven and earth :* on many great accounts was our Lord's resurrection behooveful ; so that it is no wonder, if God took such especial care to assure its truth, and recommend

SERM.
XXX.

Rom. vi. 5.

1 Cor. xv.
22, 49.
1 Cor. vi.

1 Thess. iv.

Acts xx. 28.

John xvii.
2.
Phil. ii. 9.

Matt.
xxviii. 18.

SERM. its belief to us ; appointing so many choice persons
 XXX. by their testimony to assert and inculcate it ; to do
 Acts i. 22. so being often expressed a main part and peculiar
 x. 41. xiii. design of the office apostolical. Nor is it strange,
 31. that to the hearty belief and ingenuous profession
 of this one article, (it enfolding, or inferring the truth
 of all other Christian doctrines,) salvation is annex-
 Rom. x. 6, ed, according to that assertion of St. Paul ; *The*
 9. *righteousness of faith saith thus*, (or this is the
 purport of the Christian institution,) *That if thou*
shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and
shalt believe in thy heart that God raised him
from the dead, thou shalt be saved. Nor is it much,
 that a consideration of this point should be so conti-
 nually present to the minds of the ancient Christians,
 that whenever they did meet, they should be ready
 to salute one another with a *Χριστὸς ἀνέστη*, *Christ is*
risen ; it importing so great benefits, and produc-
 ing so excellent fruits ; in regard whereto St. Paul
 expressed his so ardent desire and high esteem of
 Phil. iii. 10. *knowing Christ, and the power of his resurrection*,
 as the most valuable of all knowledges ; which having
 in some measure declared, I come now briefly to apply.

1. First then ; The consideration of our Lord's re-
 surrection should strengthen our faith and quicken
 our hope in God, causing us firmly to believe his
 word, and confidently to rely upon his promises,
 especially those which concern our future state.
 God having thereby, as by a most sensible proof,
 against all objections of our feeble reason, demon-
 strated himself able, as by a most sure pledge de-
 clared himself willing, to bestow upon us a happy
 immortality, in gracious reward of our obedience :
 for seeing by so illustrious an instance God hath ma-

nifested that he is thoroughly reconcilable to sin- SERM.
XXX.
ners, that he bountifully rewardeth obedience, that death and hell are vincible, what reason can we have to distrust his fidelity, to doubt of his power, or to despair of his mercy? Surely, he that was so faithful in raising our Lord from the grave, so notably rewarding his obedience and patience, (in advancing him to supreme dignity and glory at his right hand,) will not fail also to confer on us (walking in the footsteps of his piety) the promised inheritance of everlasting life and bliss, the never-fading crown of righteousness and glory. Surely, by this noble experiment we are clearly informed, and should be fully persuaded, that nothing can destroy us, nothing can harm us, nothing can separate us from our God and our happiness; that no force, no fraud, no spite of men, or rage of hell, can finally prevail against us; what then reasonably can be dreadful or discouraging to us, what should be able to drive us into distrust or despair?

2. This point affordeth matter of great joy, and an obligation thereto. If the news of our Saviour's first birth were (as an angel called them) *good tidings of great joy to all people*, how much more may the news concerning this second nativity of him be hugely gladsome! for in that birth he did but assume our flesh; in this he did advance it: then he began to sustain our infirmities; now he surmounted them: by his incarnation he became *subject to death*; by his resurrection death was subdued to him: at that he entered into the field, and set upon the bloody conflict with our foes; in this he returned a triumphant conqueror, having utterly vanquished and quelled them: the fury of the world, the malice

Luke ii. 10.

Phil. ii. 8.

1 Cor. xv. 57.

SERM. of hell, the tyranny of sin, the empire of death, all
 XXX. of them combined to render us miserable, he did in
 his resurrection perfectly triumph over : and doth it
 not then become us to attend his glorious victories
 with our joyful gratulations ? ‘Is it not extremely
 comfortable to behold our gallant champion, (the
 only champion of our life and welfare,) after all the
 cruel blows which the infernal powers laid on him,
 after all the ghastly wounds which human madness
 did inflict, after he had passed through the scorch-
 ing flames of divine wrath and justice, after he had
 felt the sorest pangs of death, perfectly recovered
 from all those distresses ; standing upright, and
 trampling on the necks of his proud enemies ? Are
 not most sprightly expressions of gratitude, are not
 most cheerful acclamations of praise due from us
 to the invincible *Captain of our salvation* ? Shall
 we not with great alacrity of mind contemplate the
 happy success of that mighty enterprise, wherein no
 less our welfare than his glory was concerned ? Is
 it not a pleasure to consider ourselves so exempted
 from that fatal doom, to which all human race was
 sentenced ; to see life and immortality so springing
 forth upon us ; to view ourselves, the children of
 dust and corruption, from hence in age and dignity so
 nigh equalled to the firstborn sons of the creation ?

It is said of the first disciples, that although they
 saw and felt our Lord risen, yet *for joy they could*

Ἐ Σήμερον ἡμῶν τὰ λαμπρὰ νικητήρια γέγονε. σήμερον ἡμῶν ὁ δεσπότης
 τὸ κατὰ θανάτου τρόπαιον στήσας, καὶ τοῦ διαβόλου τὴν τυραννίδα καταλύ-
 σας τὴν διὰ τῆς ἀναστάσεως ὁδὸν ἡμῖν εἰς σωτηρίαν ἐχαρίσατο.

Ἡ ποθεινὴ καὶ σωτήριος ἑορτὴ — ἡ τῆς εἰρήνης ὑπόθεσις, ἡ τῆς κατάλλα-
 γῆς ἀφορμὴ, ἡ τῶν πολέμων ἀναίρεσις, ἡ τοῦ θανάτου κατάλυσις, ἡ τοῦ δια-
 βόλου ἥττα — Chrys. tom. v. Or. 85.

not believe it; so incredibly good was the news to them; excess of love and delight choked, or rather suspended their faith: we cannot be such infidels from surprise; but let us be as faithful in our joy.

SERM. XXX.

Luke xxiv.

41.

Quod credunt tardius, non est

perfidie, sed amoris.

Chrysost. Serm. 81.

3. Great consolation surely it ought to breed in us, to consider, that by this event our redemption is completed, and we become entirely capable of salvation; that in it a full discharge is exhibited from the guilt and from the punishment of all our sins, whereof we do truly repent; that God's justice appeareth satisfied, and his anger pacified; that his countenance shineth out clearly with favour and mercy toward us; that our condemnation is reversed, our ransom is accepted, our shackles are loosed, and our prison set open; so that with full liberty, security, and hope, we may walk forward in the paths of righteousness toward our better country, the region of eternal felicity. Further,

4. This consideration should be a forcible engagement upon us to obedience and holy life. Our Lord did by his resurrection gain a dominion over us, unto which if we do not submit, we shall be very injurious and wicked; unto which if we do not correspond by all humble observance, we shall be very ingrateful and undutiful; *He was raised to bless us, in turning every one of us from our iniquities*; and no less unhappy than unworthy we shall be, if we defeat that gracious purpose; it is the condition of our obtaining the happy fruits and benefits of his resurrection, that we should ourselves rise with him *unto righteousness and newness of life*; by not complying therewith, we shall render his resurrection unprofitable to us, becoming unworthy and incapable

Rom. xiv.

9.

Acts iii. 26.

Rom. vi. 4.

SERM. of any good advantage thereby. *Awake*, saith the
 XXX. *apostle, thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead,*
 Eph. v. 14. *and Christ shall give thee life*; to awake from our
 spiritual slumber, to arise from dead works, are the
 terms on which Christ doth offer that eternal happy
 life: for as the pains and ignominies of his death will
 Phil. iii. 10. nowise avail those who are not *conformable to his*
 Rom. vi. 5. *death, in dying to sin and mortifying their lusts*;
 so will not they be concerned in the joys and glories
 of his resurrection, who are not *planted in the like-*
 2 Cor. v. 15. *ness thereof* by renovation of their minds and re-
 formation of their lives; for as *he died*, so he was
 also *raised for us, that we should not henceforth*
live to ourselves, but unto him who died and rose
again for us: our sins did slay him; it must be our
 repentance that reviveth him to us, our obedience
 that maketh him to live in our behalf; for Christ is
 not in effect risen to impenitent people: as they con-
 tinue dead in trespasses and sins, as they lie buried
 in corruption of heart and life, so *their condemna-*
tion abideth, and death retaineth its entire power
 Phil. iii. 11. over them; they shall not *καταρτᾶν εἰς τὴν ἐξανάστασιν*,
attain unto that happy resurrection, whereof our
 Lord's resurrection was the pledge and pattern; so
 John iii. 36, did our Lord assure in his preaching; *He*, said our
 15. Lord, *that believeth in the Son* (that is, who with a
 sincere, strong, and lively faith, productive of due
 obedience, believeth in him) *hath everlasting life*;
 but *ὁ ἀπειθῶν, he that disobeyeth* (or with a practical
 infidelity disbelieveth) *the Son shall not see life, but*
the wrath of God abideth on him; whence we may
 Rom. viii. well infer with St. Paul, *Therefore, brethren, we*
 12, 13. *are debtors, not to the flesh, to live after the flesh*:
for if we live after the flesh, we shall die; but if

through the Spirit we do mortify the deeds of the body, we shall live ; that is, assuredly by obey-
ing God's will we shall obtain, by disobedience we must forfeit, all the benefits of our Lord's resurrection.

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5. Lastly, The contemplation of this point should elevate our thoughts and affections unto heaven and heavenly things, above the sordid pleasures, the fading glories, and the unstable possessions of this world; *for him we should follow whithersoever he goeth ;* rising with him, not only from all sinful desires, but from all inferior concernments, soaring after him in the contemplation of our minds and affections of our heart; that *although we are absent from the Lord in the body,* we may be *present with him in spirit,* having our conversation in heaven, and our heart there, where our treasure is; for if our souls do still grovel on the earth, if they be closely affixed to worldly interests, deeply immersed in sensual delights, utterly *enslaved to corruption,* we do not partake of our Lord's resurrection, being quite severed from his living body, and continuing in vast distance from him: I shall therefore conclude, recommending that admonition of St. Paul; *If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God: set your affections on things above, not on things on the earth: for you are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God; that when Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then ye may also appear with him in glory.* Amen.

Rev. xiv. 4.
Eph. ii. 6.

2 Cor. v. 6.
Phil. i. 23.
iii. 20.
Matt. vi. 21.

2 Pet. ii. 19.
Rom. viii. 21.
(Gal. vi. 8.
Rev. iii. 1.
1 Tim. v. 6.)
Col. iii. 1—4

Now the God of peace, that brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great Shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting

Heb. xiii.
20, 21.

SERM. *covenant, make us perfect in every good work to*
XXX. *do his will, working in us that which is wellpleas-*
ing in his sight, through Jesus Christ; to whom be
glory for ever and ever. Amen.

**He ascended into Heaven, and sitteth at the
right hand of God.**

S E R M O N X X X I .

MARK xvi. 19.

*He was received up into heaven, and sat on the right hand
of God.*

OUR Lord after his resurrection having consum- SERM.
XXXI.
mated what was requisite to be done by him upon
earth, for the confirmation of our faith, and the con-
stitution of his church; having for a competent
time conversed with his disciples, enlightening their
minds with knowledge of the truths concerning him,
and in right understanding of the scriptures relating
to him; establishing their faith in immoveable con-
viction, inflaming their affections by pathetical dis-
course, comforting their minds with gracious pro-
mises against tribulations ensuing, and arming their
hearts with courage and patience against all opposi-
tions of earth and hell; directing and prescribing to
them how they should proceed in the instruction of
men, and conversion of the world to the belief of his
doctrine, the acceptance of his overtures, the observ-
ance of his laws; furnishing them with authority,
and giving them orders to attest the truth concern-
ing him, to dispense the grace and mercy procured
by him, and to promulgate the whole will of God to

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mankind; promising them spiritual gifts and aids (both ordinary and extraordinary) necessary or conducive either to the common edification or to the particular welfare of Christians; ordering them to collect and compact the society of faithful believers in him, which *he had purchased with his blood*; in fine, imparting to them his effectual benediction, and a promise of continual assistance in the prosecution of those great and holy designs which he committed to their management; having, I say, accomplished all these things, which St. Mark in this verse expresseth briefly by the words *μετὰ τὸ λαλῆσαι αὐτοῖς*, *after he had spoken to them*; and which St. Luke compriseth in the words *ἐντειλάμενος αὐτοῖς*, that is, having imparted to them all needful instructions, and imposed all fitting commands upon them; he in their presence departed away into the possession of his glorious state; *He was*, saith St. Mark in our text, *received up into heaven, and sat on the right hand of God*.

Which words of the evangelist do contain two grand points of our faith, The *ascension of our Lord to heaven*, and his *session there at God's right hand*; the right understanding and due consideration whereof [as it is now peculiarly, when the church recommendeth these points to be the subjects of our devotion most seasonable, so perpetually] is of great use for the edification of our souls and the direction of our practice: in order to which purposes, I shall endeavour to explain them, to confirm the truth of them, to shew the ends and effects of them, and practically to apply them.

I. *He was received into heaven*; this is the first point, wherein we may observe the *act*, and its *term*:

the *act*, ἀνελήφθη, he was assumed, or *taken up*, saith SERM. XXXI.
St. Mark here; ἀνεφέρετο, he was elevated, or *car-*
ried up; and ἐπήρθη, *he was borne up*, saith St. Luke; Luke xxiv.
ἐπορεύθη, *he went into heaven*, saith St. Peter: which 51.
phrases do import, that he was, according to his hu- Acts i. 9.
manity, (or that his body and soul united together 1 Pet. iii.
were,) translated by the divine power into heaven; 22.
or that he as God (by the divine power immanent
in him) did transfer himself as man thither; so that
he both was carried and did go with a proper local
motion, the term whereof was heaven.

And what is meant by *heaven*, in the proper sense
adequate to this matter, may appear from other
places equivalent, by which this action, or the result
thereof are expressed. It is called *ascending to his* John xx.
Father, and *passing out of this world to his Fa-* 17.
ther; that is, departing hence into the place of God's xiii. 1.
more especial presence and residence; where *he*, as
the Apostle to the Hebrews saith, *appeareth to the* Ἐμφανίζε-
face of God; being, as St. Peter speaketh, *exalted to* ται τῷ προσ-
the right hand of God; (that is, to the greatest prox- ὄπῳ Θεοῦ.
imity, and therefore highest eminency, with God.) It Heb. ix. 24.
is termed being *taken up into glory*, and *entering* Acts ii. 38.
into his glory; that is, into a most glorious place v. 31.
and state peculiar to him; that place which St. Peter 1 Tim. iii.
calleth μεγαλοπρεπὴς δόξα, the magnificent, or *most ex-* 16.
cellent glory. It is styled *entering* εἰς τὸ ἐσώτερον τοῦ Luke xxiv.
καταπετάσματος, into *the most inward part behind the* 26.
veil; and into the τὰ ἅγια, the especially *holy places*; 2 Pet. i. 17.
that is, into the inmost recesses of glory, inaccessible, Heb. vi. 19.
and in degree incommunicable, to any other. ix. 12.
He is said to have *passed through the heavens*, (that Διηλθού-
is, through all places inferior to the highest top of ται τοὺς
glory and felicity;) to have *ascended* ὑπεράνω πάντων οὐρανούς.
Heb. iv. 14.
Eph. iv. 10.

SERM. XXXI. τῶν οὐρανῶν, *over above all the heavens*; to have become higher than the heavens, or advanced above them; by which expressions it appeareth, that the *term* of our Saviour's ascent, called *heaven* here, was that place of all places in the universe of things in situation most eminent, in quality most holy, in dignity most excellent, in glory most illustrious; the Heb. ix. 11, inmost sanctuary of God's *temple* above, *not made* 22. *with hands*; the most august chamber of presence in the celestial court: and whereas there are, as our John xiv. 2. Lord telleth us, *many mansions*, or apartments, in the house of God, the chief and best of them our Lord hath taken up for his residence; whereas heaven is a place of vast extent, to the utmost top thereof our Lord hath ascended, even into that φῶς, 1 Tim. vi. 16. ἀπρόσιτον, *inaccessible light* where *God dwelleth*.

And there, as it followeth, *he sitteth at God's right hand*; the meaning of which words it is not difficult to find out; it being obvious and clear, that the state of things above, in the other blessed world, is in the scripture represented to us by that similitude, which is most apt to beget in us reverence toward God, and which indeed really doth most resemble it; by the state of a king here, sitting upon his throne, being surrounded with personages of highest rank, worth, and respect; his nearest relations, his dearest favourites, the chief officers of his crown, and ministers of his affairs there attending upon him; so that yet for distinction, some place more eminent, and signally honourable, is assigned to that person, to whom the king pleaseth to declare most especial favour and regard; the which place by custom, grounded upon obvious reason, hath been of Psal. cxviii. old, and continueth still, determined to the next 16.

place at *the right hand*; (the *next* place, because SERM. XXXI.
nearness yieldeth opportunity for all kind of conver-

sation and address; at *the right hand*, because that hand hath advantage for strength and activity acquired by use, and therefore hath a special aptitude to offer any thing, or to receive, as occasion doth require:) hence for instance of the custom among those from whom the phrase is taken, when Bathsheba, king Solomon's mother, did come unto him, it is said;

The king—sat down upon his throne, and caused 1 Kings ii. 19.
a seat to be set for the king's mother; and she sat

on his right hand: thus our Lord, as man, in regard to his perfect obedience and patience, being raised by God to the supreme pitch of favour, honour, and power with him, God having *advanced him to be* Acts v. 31.
a Prince and a Saviour, to give repentance unto

Israel, and remission of sins; having superex- Phil. ii. 9,
alted him, and bestowed on him a name above all 10.

names, to which all knees in heaven, in earth, and under the earth must bow; having seated him Eph. i. 20,
in heavenly places above all principality, and au- 21.

thority, and power, and dominion, and name that is named, either in the present world, or in that

which is to come; having committed to him all au- Matt. xxviii. 18.
thority in heaven and upon earth, and given all John iii. 35.

things into his hand; having constituted him heir xiii. 3. xvii. 2.

of all things, and subjected all things under his Heb. i. 2.
feet, and crowned him with sovereign glory and ho- ii. 8, 9.
nour; having, in fine, given unto him all that which 1 Pet. iii. 22.

in the Revelation the innumerable host of heaven acknowledgeth him worthy of; *power, and riches,* Rev. v. 2.

and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing; that is, all good and excellency con-

ceivable in the most eminent degree, so that γίνεται

SERM. *ἐν πᾶσι πρωτεύων*, he *in all things becometh to have the*
 XXXI. *preeminence*; God having, I say, conferred all these
 Col. i. 18. preeminences of dignity, power, favour, and felicity
 Eph. i. 20. upon our Saviour, is therefore said to have *seated*
 Matt. xxvi. *him at his right hand; at the right hand of power,*
 64. say the Gospels; that is, so at the right hand of the
 Mark xiv. 62. Almighty Potentate, that all power is imparted to
 Luke xxii. 69. him for the governance and preservation of his
 Heb. viii. 1. church; *at the right hand of the Majesty on high,*
and at the right hand of the throne of God, saith
 the Apostle to the Hebrews; that is, so at the right
 hand of the Sovereign King of the world, that royal
 dignity is communicated to him; in regard to which
 all honour and worship, all service and obedience,
 are due to him from all creatures.

Thus much plainly the whole speech, *sitting at*
God's right hand, doth import; the which matter
 is otherwise more generally and simply expressed
 1 Pet. iii. 22. by being at God's right hand; *Who*, saith St. Peter,
is gone into heaven, and is at the right hand of
God; angels and authorities and powers being
 Rom. viii. 34. *made subject to him*: and, *It is Christ*, saith St.
 Paul, *that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who*
is also at the right hand of God: sometimes also
 our Lord is represented standing at God's right
 hand, as in the Revelation several times, and in the
 vision of St. Stephen, who *saw the glory of God,*
 Rev. v. 6. *and Jesus standing at the right hand of God*; the
 xiv. 1. *which posture doth then seem purposely assigned to*
 Acts vii. 55, 56. *him, when he is represented assisting his servants,*
 or in readiness to achieve some great work for the
 good of his church; but most commonly, as in our
 text, it is called *sitting*; the which word in ordinary
 use denoteth an abode, or permanency, in any state:

but there is, perhaps, some peculiar emphasis designed in attributing to our Lord that position ; it implying the solid ground, the firm possession, the durable continuance, the undisturbed rest and quiet of that glorious condition, wherein he is instated : the term *sitting* may also seem to augment the main sense ; for that *sitting* is the most honourable posture, and therefore implieth to the utmost that eminency of favour and regard which our Lord enjoyeth in God's sight. It may further also denote the nature, quality, and design of our Lord's preferment ; his being constituted our ruler and our judge ; *sitting* being a posture most proper and peculiar to such persons ; whence this expression representeth him as seated upon a throne of majesty, or upon a tribunal of justice^a.

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I shall only further observe, that the attainment and settlement of our Lord in this high state is by one word frequently in scripture called his glorification ; *The Spirit*, it is said, *was not yet, because Jesus was not yet glorified* : and, *When Jesus was glorified, then they remembered that these things were written of him* : and, *The hour is come, that the Son of man should be glorified* : and, *Now, Father*, prayeth our Saviour, *glorify me with thee, with the glory which I had with thee before the world was* ; that is, constitute me as mediator in glory supereminent above all creatures, accordingly as in my divine nature I was eternally with thee most gloriously happy : and, *The God of your fa-*

John vii. 39.
xii. 16, 23.
xiii. 32.
xvii. 1, 5.

Acts iii. 13.

^a Sedere judicantis est, stare pugnantis ; Stephanus ergo in labore certaminis positus stantem vidit, quem adiutorem habuit ; sed hunc post ascensionem Marcus sedere scribit, quia post ascensionis suæ gloriam Judex in fine videbitur. *Leo M.*

SERM. *thers, saith St. Peter to the Jews, hath glorified his*
 XXXI. *child Jesus, whom ye delivered up: and, We see*

Heb. ii. 9. *Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels, for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honour, saith the Apostle to the Hebrews. So much for explication of these points.*

II. The confirmation of them may be drawn partly from *ocular testimony*, partly from *rational deduction*, partly from *their correspondence to ancient presignifications and predictions*.

The ascension of our Lord toward heaven was testified by the apostles, who were eyewitnesses thereof; for *βλεπόντων αὐτῶν, they beholding, he was*, saith St. Luke, *taken up, and a cloud received him out of their sight.*

Luke xxii. His arriving at the supreme pitch of glory, and
 69. sitting there, is deduced from the authority of his
 Matt. xxvi. own word, and of his inspired disciples, the which
 64. standeth upon the same grounds with other points of Christian faith and doctrine; the which it is not seasonable now to insist upon.

But it may be proper and useful to consider how they (as all other important events and performances belonging to our Saviour) were by the Holy Spirit in the ancient prophets many ways presignified and predicted: that they were so, our Lord telleth us;

Luke xxiv. *Ought not Christ, said he, according to what the*
 25, 26. *prophets had spoken, to suffer, and so to enter into*

1 Pet. i. 11. *his glory?* and St. Peter assureth us, that *the Spirit of Christ, which was in the prophets, did testify beforehand the sufferings of Christ, and the glories after the same*: so indeed there were many signal types representing them, and many notable passages respecting them, interpreted ac-

according to analogy, with other mystical representations. SERM.
XXXI.

Isaac, the heir of promise, after his being devoted for sacrifice, and *received from death in a parable*, Heb. xi. 19. was settled in a prosperous state of life, *God being with him, and blessing him in all things.* Gen. xxvi. 3, 12, &c. Joseph, being freed from that death to which by his envious brethren he was designed, and raised from that burial in prison into which by the Egyptian Gentiles he was cast, was advanced thence unto flourishing dignity, and established in chief authority over the king's house, and *over all the land.* Gen. xli. 40. Which persons, as they were in other things, so may they well be conceived in these respects to have been types of our Lord's ascension and glorification. Joshua, (who in name and performances was the most exact type of our Lord,) being preserved from the common fate of the people, and with miraculous victory over all the accursed enemies of God's people, entering as captain of Israel into the possession of the promised land, the sure type of heaven, doth fitly represent the glorious ascension of our Lord into heaven, and his everlasting possession thereof, together with the good people which follow his conduct. The great afflictions and depressions of David, with his restoration from them unto a mighty height of royal splendour and prosperity, (all enemies foreign and domestic being subdued,) may be also supposed to typify the same; his expressions in acknowledgment and thanksgiving for them seeming to allude hither, and to be more congruously applicable to our Lord, than to himself: such for instance as those are in the 21st Psalm; *He asked life of thee, and thou gavest it him, even length of days for ever and* Psalm. xxi. 4, 5, 6.

SERM. *ever: his glory is great in thy salvation; honour*
 XXXI. *and majesty hast thou laid upon him: for thou*

Gen. v. 24.
 Heb. xi. 5.

hast made him most blessed for ever; thou hast made him exceedingly glad with thy countenance, &c. Enoch, having walked with God, (that is, in constant devotion, and in faithful obedience to God's will,) and having received testimony that he pleased God, was taken unto God; thereby prefiguring the ascension of the well-beloved, in whom God was most well pleased: so was also the translation of
 2 Kings ii. *Elijah into heaven,* in presence of Elisha and other
 11. *his disciples, after he most zealously had served God, in declaration of his will and maintenance of his truth, a manifest prelude of our Lord's like translation, after he had been employed in the like service, though far more high and important, and performed it in a more eminent manner.*

The high priest was a certain type of our Lord, and the Jewish temple a shadow of heaven, and the
 Heb. ix. 24. *holy of holies* a figure of the highest place in heaven; wherefore the high priest's sole and solemn entry once only in the year into the most holy place, after having by a bloody sacrifice made atonement
 Lev. xvi. 16, *for all the transgressions of the children of Israel,*
 34. *and his there sprinkling the blood of the sacrifice*
 Exod. xxx. *upon the mercy seat, and before the mercy seat,*
 10. *(the emblem of God's special presence,) doth certainly prefigure our Lord's ascending into heaven,*
 Heb. ix. 7. *and sitting there at God's right hand; there, by representation of his merits and passion performing the office of a most holy priest and gracious mediator*
 Heb. ix. 14, *for us; By his own blood, saith the divine apostle,*
 24. x. 12. *he entered once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us: He is entered, not into*

the holy places made with hands, which are figures of the true, but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us. SERM. XXXI.

Thus were these points aptly signified : they were also predicted : for David, in the 68th Psalm, celebrating the glorious triumphs of God over the enemies of his people, and in consequence upon them his solemn entrance and seating himself in Sion, the hill which he delighteth to dwell in, (the usual emblem of heaven,) subjoineth ; *Thou hast ascended on high*, (לָמָרוֹם, to the high place of heaven,) *thou hast led captivity captive : thou hast received gifts for men ; yea, for the rebellious also, that the Lord God might dwell among them* : which words appositely suit to our Lord's triumphant ascension, after having subdued all the enemies of his church, and upon which he liberally dispensed wonderful gifts and graces to his people, and are by the unerring interpretation of St. Paul applied thereto. Huc etiam. Ps. lxxviii. 18. Eph. iv. 8.

The ascension of our Lord seemeth also (at least according to mystical exposition reasonably grounded) to be respected in the 24th Psalm, as generally throughout, so particularly in those words, *Lift up your heads, O ye gates ; and be ye lift up, ye everlasting doors ; and the King of glory shall come in* : where, according to the first and more literal sense, the entrance of the ark (the symbol of our Lord himself, in whom God is most specially present, in whom all the fulness of the Godhead dwelleth bodily) into the temple is described : but in a second more elevate, more proper, and more full meaning, the entrance of our Lord (the true Shechinah) into heaven seemeth denoted ; the doors of that temple not made with hands, into which he, *the Lord*

Psalm. xxiv. 7, 8, 9. Col. ii. 9.

SERM. of glory, at his ascension did enter, being indeed
 XXXI. most truly *the everlasting doors*; and the doors
 of the earthly temple being only such as typifying
 them.

Again, the session of our Lord at God's right hand
 Psal. cx. 1. is expressly foretold by David; *The Lord*, saith he,
said unto my Lord, Sit at my right hand, until I
have made thine enemies thy footstool. Who but
 the Messiah could be that Lord of David, unto whom
 God spake? Who but he could be an eternal priest
 Matt. xxii. after the order of Melchizedek? Not only therefore
 44. our Lord himself expoundeth that place of the Mes-
 sias, but the ancient Jews did commonly understand
 it to concern him; as appeareth by their tacit con-
 sent, and forbearing to contradict our Lord so inter-
 preting it.

In fine, all the prophecies, which are very many,
 that concern the spiritual and eternal kingdom of
 the Messiah, (his being invested with and exercising
 regal dignity and power over God's people for ever,)
 do in effect declare the ascension and session of our
 Lord; particularly those of David; *I have set my*
 Psal. ii. 6, 8. *king upon my holy hill of Zion*; and, *Thy throne,*
 Heb. i. 5. *O God, is for ever and ever; the sceptre of thy*
 Ps. xlv. 6. *kingdom is a right sceptre*: and that of Daniel; *I*
 Heb. i. 8. *saw in the night visions one like the Son of man*
 Dan. vii. *came with the clouds of heaven, and came to the*
 13, 14. *Ancient of days, and they brought him near before*
him: and there was given him dominion, and glory,
and a kingdom, that all people, nations, and lan-
guages, should serve him: his dominion is an ever-
lasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and
his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed. So
 were these points foreshewed and foretold, to the

manifestations of God's wisdom and the confirmation of our faith. SERM.
XXXI.

III. Now for the ends and effects of our Lord's ascension, and his abode in heaven at God's right hand, (I join them together as coincident, or subordinate,) they are in the scripture declared to be chiefly these.

In general, our Lord by them was invested in the complete exercise of all the offices, and in the full enjoyment of all the privileges, belonging to him as perfect Mediator, Sovereign King, High Priest, and Archprophet of God's church and people: he did initially and in part exercise those functions upon earth; and a ground of enjoying those preeminences he laid here; but the entire execution and possession of all, by his ascension into heaven, and in his session there, he did obtain particularly.

I. Our Lord did ascend unto, and doth reside in heaven, at the right hand of divine majesty and power, that as a king he might govern us, protecting us from all danger, relieving us in all want, delivering us from all evil; that he might subdue and destroy all the enemies of his kingdom and our salvation; the Devil with all his retinue, the world, the flesh, sin, death, and hell; whatever doth oppose his glory, his truth, his service; whatever consequently, by open violence or fraudulent practice, doth hinder our salvation: *The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit thou on my right hand, until I have made thine enemies thy footstool;* so God by the Holy Spirit in David did speak unto him: whence St. Peter doth thus infer; *Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly, that God hath made him Lord and Christ;* that is, his being seated in that

Psal. cx. 1.
Matt. xxii.
44.
Heb. i. 13.
Acts ii. 36.

SERM. place of special eminency is an infallible argument
 XXXI. of his royal majesty and sovereignty: and, *This*
 Heb. x. 12, *man*, saith the Apostle to the Hebrews, *after he*
 13. *had offered one sacrifice for sins, for ever sat*
 1 Cor. xv. *down at the right hand of God, from henceforth*
 25. *expecting till his enemies be made his footstool;*
 and accordingly, *He must*, as St. Paul saith, *reign,*
until he hath put all his enemies under his feet.
 By various combats in his life, our Lord did worst
 and weaken his and our enemies; and in the last
 great battle on his cross, he did thoroughly rout and
 overthrow them; but by his triumphant ascension
 Eph. iv. 8. into heaven *he led captivity captive*, enjoying the
 glory and benefit of his victory; by sitting at God's
 right hand he keepeth them down in irrecoverable
subjection under his feet, so that none of them can
 make any successful insurrection against him: for
 no power certainly shall ever be able to withstand
 his will and command, who sitteth at the helm of
 sovereignty immense and omnipotent; at that right
 hand, which can do any thing, which wieldeth and
 moderateth all things every where; no fraud can
 elude, no secret conspiracy can escape his know-
 ledge, who, sitting in that heavenly watchtower of
 infinite wisdom and omniscience, beholdeth what-
 ever is done, said, or thought in all the world.

He so there with royal might protecteth us; and
 with royal goodness, munificence, and clemency, he
 doth also thence dispense grace and mercy to his
 faithful subjects: for all good gifts and graces be-
 stowed on the church in general for common edifi-
 cation, and to each member thereof singly for its
 Eph. iv. 12. particular benefit, which are useful for *perfecting of*
the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edi-

fication of Christ's body in truth, holiness, order, SERM. XXXI.
and peace, are expressed to proceed from our Lord's
ascension; *To every one of you*, saith St. Paul, *is* Eph. iv. 7.
given grace according to the measure of the gift
of Christ; that is, to every one of you proportion-
ably, according to the quality of your employment,
rank, or station in the church, and according to the
particular exigency of your needs, as Christ in wis-
dom seeth fit, grace is afforded; in correspondence,
addeth he, to the Psalmist's prophecy concerning our
Saviour, *Having ascended up on high, he led cap-* Eph. iv. 8.
tivity captive, and gave gifts unto men.

Particularly in virtue or consequence of his ascen-
sion and glorification, to all true penitents and con-
verts unto God, mercy and pardon for their sins are
dispensed: that repentance should be acceptable to
God, and available for attainment of mercy, our Lord
did indeed merit for us by his suffering; but he ef-
fectually dispenseth it in God's name, being now in-
stated in glory, as a noble boon of his royal clemen-
cy; *God*, saith St. Peter, *exalted him as a Prince* Acts v. 31.
and a Saviour, to give repentance unto Israel, and Luke xxiv. 47.
remission of sins.

2. Our Saviour did ascend, and now sitteth at
God's right hand, that he may, in regard to us, there
exercise his priestly function. Having in this out-
ward tabernacle once offered up himself a pure and
perfect sacrifice for the expiation of our sins, he en-
tered within the veil, into the most holy place, there Heb. x. 12.
presenting his blood before God himself, to the full
effect of obtaining mercy for us, and restoring us to
God's favour; *He is*, saith the apostle, *entered into* Heb. ix. 24.
heaven itself, there to appear in the presence of
God for us; so that whenever we by our frailty do

SERM. fall into sin, and do heartily by repentance turn unto
 XXXI. God, invoking his mercy, our Lord is ready, by ap-

1 John ii.
 1, 2.

Rom. viii.
 34.

plying the virtue of his sacrifice, and pleading our cause with God, upon the terms of that gracious covenant purchased and ratified by his blood, to procure mercy for us : for, *If any man sin, we have, saith St. John, an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous, who is a propitiation for our sins, and for the sins of the whole world: and, Who, saith St. Paul, is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us; that is, seeing our Lord hath offered a well-pleasing sacrifice for our sins, and doth at God's right hand continually renew it, by presenting it unto God, and interceding with him for the effect thereof; what, supposing us qualified for mercy, can hinder us from obtaining it?*

Heb. vii. 25.

Eph. ii. 8.

Heb. iv. 14.
 vii. 25.

Our Lord also doth at God's right hand discharge the princely ministry of praying for us, and so interceding in our behalf, as thereby to acquire from God to be conferred on us whatever is needful or conducive to our salvation; *He, saith the apostle, is able to save to the uttermost those that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for us.* More particularly he, by his mediation there, doth procure for us a free access to God in devotion, a favourable reception of our petitions and services, a good success of them in the supply of all our needs; for, *Through him we have access by the Spirit unto the Father; and, Having a great High Priest, that is passed into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God—let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy,*

and find grace in the time of need, saith the Apostle to the Hebrews: and, *He*, as he is represented in the Apocalypse, is that *angel of the covenant*, who at the golden altar before God doth offer up the prayers of the saints, incensed by his mediation and merits. SERM. XXXI.
Rev. viii. 3.

Hence in his name and through him it is, that we are enjoined to present our prayers, our thanksgivings, and all our services; **doing all, whatever we do, in the name of the Lord Jesus.* (John x. 9.
xiv. 6.
Rom. v. 2.
Eph. iii. 12.
Heb. x. 19.
Eph. v. 20.
John xiv.
13. xv. 16.
xvi. 23, 24.)
* Col. iii. 17.

3. Again, our Lord telleth us, that it was necessary he should depart hence, and enter into this glorious state, that he might there exercise his prophetic office, by imparting to us his holy Spirit for our instruction, direction, assistance, and comfort; *Behold*, said he upon his departure, *I send the promise of my Father upon you; but tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem, until ye be endued with the power from on high*: this he promised then to his disciples, but did not perform until his exaltation; *Being therefore*, saith St. Peter, *exalted to the right hand of God, and having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Ghost, he hath shed forth this which ye now see and hear.* He did not, and indeed (in consistence with the divine purpose and the designed economy of things) could not perform this until then; *It is*, said he, *expedient for you that I go away: for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send him unto you*: that is, God, for promoting our Saviour's honour, and for the glory of his undertaking, had in his wisdom determined, that so incomparably excellent a gift should be the Luke xxiv 49.
Acts ii. 33.
John xvi. 7.

SERM. reward of his obedience, the consequence of his triumph, the effect of his intercession above, an ornament of his royal state, a pledge of his princely munificence: it was reserved as a most rich and majestic gratuity, fit to be conferred at his coronation, then when he solemnly was inaugurated to sovereign dignity, and invested with power superlative:

XXXI. *John vii. 39.* whence, *the Holy Spirit*, it is said in St. John, *was not yet*, (that is, it was not yet poured forth, or bestowed in that conspicuous manner and copious measure, as God intended it should be afterwards,) *because Jesus was not yet glorified*: it was from Jesus being received into glory, and advanced to God's right hand, that so transcendent a boon was in God's purpose, and according to his promise, designed to come down.

4. Again, our Lord himself telleth us, that he *John xiv. 2.* went to heaven, there *to prepare a place* for his faithful servants, to prepare *mansions* of joy and bliss *in God's presence, where is fulness of joy; at his right hand, where are pleasures for evermore.* He accordingly hath, as the apostle saith, *Heb. vi. 20.* entered as our *πρόδρομος*, *our forerunner into heaven*; as an honourable harbinger, having disposed things there for our reception and entertainment; or rather, as the son and heir of that great house, he by his authority and interest there procured leave for us to enter, and reside there, or carrieth us as his retinue thither; *John xvii. 24. xiv. 3. xii. 26.* *It is my will*, saith he, *that where I am, there should ye be also; that ye may contemplate my glory*, and consequently may partake thereof. It was indeed our Lord's ascension which did unlock the gates of heaven, before shut upon us

by our sins; which quenched the flaming sword, SERM. XXXI.
and discharged the mighty cherubim, which guarded
paradise from all access to men^b.

The ancient Fathers generally were of opinion, that heaven, before our Lord's ascension, was inaccessible^c; and that no man had ever set foot therein, until our Lord, by his actual ascent and ingress, did open the passage thither, and removed the bars there^d: to prove this, they allege that of our Lord in St. John; *No man hath ascended up into heaven, John iii. 13. but he that came down from heaven, even the Son of man, who is in heaven:* and the forecited place, *I go to prepare a place for you;* which seemeth to John xiv. 2. imply heaven before unfit to receive men: and those places, wherein our Lord affirmeth himself to be *the* John x. 7. *gate of the sheep, and the way to the Father:* and ^{xiv. 6.} that of the Apostle to the Hebrews, concerning the patriarchs, and other good men before Christ's incarnation; *And these all having obtained a good* Heb. xi. 39. *report through faith, received not the promise, God having provided some better thing for us, that they without us should not be perfect.* Hither also they referred that of the Psalmist, *Lift up your* Psal. xxiv. *heads, O ye gates; and be ye lift up, ye everlast-* ^{7, 9.} *ing doors; and the King of glory shall come in:* ^c which words they interpreted to signify the gates

^b Flammea illa rhomphæa, custos paradisi, et præsentia foribus Cherubim Christi restincta, et reserata sunt sanguine. *Hier. Ep. 3.*

^c Οὐρανὸς ἔτι ἦν ἄβατος. Chrys. ad Heb. ix. 8.

^d Ante Christum Abraham apud inferos, post Christum latro in paradiso, &c. *Hier. in Epitaph. Nepot. Ep. 3.*

^e Ὅταν ἐκ νεκρῶν ἀνέστη Χριστὸς, καὶ ἀνέβη εἰς τὸν οὐρανόν, κελεύονται οἱ ἐν οὐρανῷ ταχθέντες ἄγγελοι ἀνοίξαι τὰς πύλας τῶν οὐρανῶν. Just. M.

SERM. of heaven then to have been first opened, when our
 XXXI. Lord did ascend thither. Joshua, a most congruous

type of our Lord, leading God's people into the land of promise, did also to their sense imply our Lord's first entering into heaven. The high priest alone entering into the sanctuary, did, as they deemed, argue the same; the Apostle to the Hebrews seeming much to favour their sentiment, when he saith,

Heb. ix. 7, *Into the second (tabernacle) went the high priest alone once every year, not without blood, which he offered for himself, and the errors of the people: the Holy Ghost this signifying, that the way into the holiest of all was not yet made manifest, whilst the first tabernacle was yet standing.*

The same also was, say they, signified by those persons, who, for offences wide of malice, were detained in the cities of refuge, and prohibited to return home, until the death of the high priest, but were afterward restored *to the land of their possession*; thereby, say they, being intimated, that until after our Saviour's death no man could return into paradise, his primitive home, from which man for his sin had been excluded; but that thenceforth all persons, in an evangelical account, not malicious or wicked, had a right and liberty to return thither^f. Upon these and the like grounds did the Fathers commonly suppose no person before our Lord's ascension to have entered heaven; but however it were as to the time, yet assuredly, in order of nature

Numb.
xxxv. 28.

^f Quid est quod homicida post mortem pontificis absolutus ad terram propriam redit? nisi quod humanum genus, quod peccando sibi mortem intulit, post mortem veri Sacerdotis, id est Christi peccatorum vinculis solvitur, et in paradisi possessionem reparatur. *Greg. M. Hom. in Ezech.*

and causality, it was he that did first ascend thither; **SERM.**
 and by virtue of his ascension it is, that any man **XXXI.**
 ever did or shall ever come thither; *His blood was,* Sanguis Christi est
 clavis para-
 di. Hier.
 Ep. 129.
 as St. Hierome saith, *the key of paradise*; the effi-
 cacy of which he carrying up with him did unlock
 it; so that thenceforth it doth stand wide open to
 those who can soar up thither, following his steps
 in persevering obedience. *Having therefore,* saith Heb. x. 19,
 20.
 the Apostle to the Hebrews, *boldness to enter into*
the holiest by the blood of Jesus, by a new and
living way, which he hath consecrated for us,
through the veil, that is to say, his flesh; and hav-
ing a high priest over the house of God; let us
draw near with a true heart: and, *He, being per-* Heb. v. 9,
 10.
fected, (or consummated in his state of glory,) be-
came to all that obey him the author of everlasting
salvation; being denominated by God a high priest
after the order of Melchizedek.

5. It was indeed an effect of our Lord's ascension
 and glorification, that all good Christians are with
 him in a sort translated into heaven, and advanced
 into a glorious state; being thence by him *made* Rev. i. 6.
 v. 10.
kings and priests to God. *We have,* saith Tertul- Usurpavi-
 mus coe-
 lum, et reg-
 num Dei in
 Christo
 Jesu. Tert.
 de Renur. c.
 51.
 lian, in *Christ Jesus seized on heaven:* and the apo-
 stle saith as much; *Us,* saith he, *who were dead in*
trespasses and sins, God hath quickened together
with Christ, and hath raised us up together, and
made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ
Jesus. In many respects we thereby are raised to
 heaven and eminent glory.

We thence even as men become greatly dignified,
 our nature being so highly advanced thereby: we
 thereby get the honour of being brethren or kinsmen
 to the world's great Lord and King; so that any of

SERM. XXXI. us may say with St. Austin, *Where my flesh reigns, there I believe myself to reign*^s: hence, as the Apostle to the Hebrews teacheth us, is that of the Psalmist verified concerning man; *Thou hast crowned him with glory and honour, and hast set him over the works of thy hands.*

Ps. viii. 5.
Heb. ii. 7.

We also more as Christians are elevated thereby by our near relation to him, and our participation with him as our head: for where the head is, there the body is: they are inseparably connected; there can be no breach, no distance between them^h; and the honour conferred on the head doth necessarily accrue to the members; according to St. Paul's rule, *If one member be glorified, all the members do rejoice with it*, or do partake of its joyful state. *Christi ascensio nostra est provectio, The ascension of Christ is our preferment; and whither the glory of the head is gone before, thither likewise is the hope of the body called*, saith a devout Fatherⁱ.

1 Cor. xii.
26.

Heb. i. 2.
Rom. viii.
17.
Eph. i. 11.

Col. i. 12.

We also are by our Lord's glorification advanced and advantaged, in that his being so glorified is a sure pledge and an earnest of that glorious reward which all good Christians shall receive. *Christ being made heir of all things*, did in his ascension, *adire hæreditatem*, take possession of that inheritance; and we consequently, as *coheirs* with him, and *having a share in the inheritance of the saints in light*, do seize thereon, acquiring therein a right and propriety at present, being assured in due time

^s Ubi caro mea regnat ibi me regnare credo. *Aug. Med.*

^h Ὃθεν ἡ κεφαλὴ, ἐκεῖ καὶ τὸ σῶμα· οὐδενὶ γὰρ μέσῳ διείργεται ἡ κεφαλὴ καὶ τὸ σῶμα. *Chrys. in Eph. λ'. 3.*

ⁱ Christi ascensio nostra est provectio; et quo præcessit gloria capitis, eo spes vocatur et corporis. *Leo P.*

f by our miscarriages we do not forfeit our title) SERM.
f an actual possession thereof; *As*, saith Tertullian, XXXI.
Christ did leave to us the earnest of the Spirit, so
we received from us the earnest of the flesh, and
carried it into heaven as a pledge of the whole
sum to be sometime brought in thither^k.

We do also in a manner ascend with Christ to
heaven, in regard that by his ascension our principal
concernments, our only considerable interests, (that
καίττων ὑπαρξίς καὶ μένουσα, *better and enduring sub-* Heb. x. 34.
stance,) the true objects of our affection, and all our
hope, are transferred thither; whence heaven becom-
eth our only true country, our *abiding city*, our real Heb. xiii.
home: we having here no true rest, no settled man-^{14.}
ion, no certain estate; but indeed being *strangers*,^{1 Pet. ii. 11.}
sojourners, and pilgrims upon earth. Our πολίτευ-^{i. 17.}
α, our politic capacity, relates to heaven, or we are^{2 Cor. v. 6.}
citizens thereof, saith St. Paul; we are *fellow-citizens* Phil. iii. 20.
of the saints, and domestics of God; are proselytes Eph. ii. 19.
to mount Sion, and unto the city of the living God, Heb. xii. 22.
the metropolis of the saints, the heavenly Jerusa- Προσκλητύ-
-*lem;* we are *translated into the kingdom of God's* θάμιν.
beloved Son, are called into his kingdom and glory, Colos. i. 13.
have our hope laid up for us in heaven, are dead 1 Thess. ii.
to this world, and our life is hid with Christ in 1, 2.
God: and where we are so concerned, there espe- Colos. i. 5.
cially in spirit and heart we may be supposed to Gal. vi. 14.
be. ii. 20.
Col. iii. 3.

6. I might add, that God did thus advance our
salvation, to declare the special regard he beareth to

^k Quemadmodum Christus nobis arrhabonem Spiritus reliquit,
et a nobis arrhabonem carnis accepit, et vexit in cœlum pig-
nis totius summæ illuc quandoque redigendæ. *Tertull. de Resurr.*

SERM. piety, righteousness, and obedience, by his so amply
 XXXI. rewarding and highly dignifying the practice there-
 Heb. ii. 9. of. *We, saith the apostle, see Jesus, for the suffer-
 ing of death, crowned with glory and honour. We
 see him, not only as an object of our contemplation,
 but as a pattern of our practice, and as a ground of*
 Heb. xii. 2. *our encouragement; Looking up, saith that apostle
 again, unto Jesus, the captain and the perfecter of
 our faith, who for the joy that was set before him
 endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set
 down at the right hand of God. God, it seemeth,
 did intend, and he doth propound, our Lord's exalta-
 tion, for an engagement and motive to us of follow-
 ing him in the way by which he attained it; giving
 us assuredly to hope for the like rewards of glory
 and joy, in proportion answerable to our imitation
 of his exemplary obedience and patience.*

Such are the principal ends and effects of our Lord's ascension, and session at God's right hand; the consideration of which points may have great use, should have much influence upon our practice.

1. It may serve to guard us from divers errors, which to the dangerous prejudice and disparagement of our religion (introducing into it notions thwarting reason and sense, charging it with needless and groundless incredibilities, exposing it to difficulties and objections so massy, that the foundations of Christian truth are scarce able to support them) have been and are asserted by divers persons, or by sects of men professing Christianity, such as are that of the old Eutychians, who held, that the human nature of our Lord was converted into his divinity, or swallowed up thereby; that of the German Ubiquitaries,

who say, that our Lord according to his human nature corporally doth exist every where ; that of the Lutheran Consubstantialists, and of the Roman Transubstantiators, who affirm, that the body of our Lord is here upon earth at once present in many places, (namely, in every place where the host is kept, or the eucharist is celebrated :) which assertions, by the right understanding of these points, will appear to be false. For our Lord did visibly in human shape ascend to heaven, (which to do is inconsistent with the invisible, omnipresent, and immoveable nature of God,) and therefore he continueth still a man ; and as such he abideth in heaven, and therefore he doth not exist everywhere or elsewhere. It is the property of a creature to have a definite existence, or to be only in one place at one time ; for could it be in divers places at once, it might by like reason be in any or in every place, and consequently it might be immense ; nor can we conceive a thing to be at once in several distant places, without its being multiplied in essence : it especially is repugnant to the nature of a body at once to possess several places, seeing its substance and quantity do not really differ, or are inseparably combined, whence it cannot be multiplied in dimensions, answerable to many localities, without being multiplied in substance ; wherefore since our Lord, as man, did by a proper local motion ascend, pass through, and enter into the heavens, (being, as it is said in holy scripture, in the visible form and dimensions of his body, *taken, carried, lifted up, gone into heaven, parting from his disciples, going away from us, leaving the world and going to the Father ; being where no man here can come, or can follow him ; being to be no*

SERM.
XXXI.

Heb. ix. 24.
iv. 14.
Acts i. 2, 9,
10, 11.
Luke xxiv.
50, 51.
Mark xvi.
19.
Matt. xxvi.
11.
1 Pet. iii.
22.

SERM. *more in the world, so that we have him not always*
 XXXI. *with us ; being there, where we, being in the body,*
 John xvi. 5, *are absent from him ; seeing he doth now reside in*
 7, 10, 28. *heaven, which must, as St. Peter affirmed, receive*
 xiv. 25. xiii. *(or hold) him, until the restitution of all things ;*
 3. vii. 33, 34. *where he constantly appeareth in God's presence*
 viii. 21. xiii. *for us, and ever liveth to make intercession for us ;*
 36. xvii. 11. *whence also we do expect, that in the like visible*
 2 Cor. v. 6. *manner as he went, that he shall come again, de-*
 Ὁ δὲ οὐρανὸν διέχεται. *scending, as St. Paul speaketh, from heaven, and*
 Acts iii. 21. *coming in the clouds of heaven, at the last resurrec-*
 Heb. vii. 25. *tion and judgment, which is therefore commonly*
 ix. 24. *termed his presence and appearance here ;) since,*
 Acts i. 11. *I say, according to the tenor of scripture, our Lord*
 1 Thess. iv. *did thus, as man, in his flesh go into heaven, and*
 16. i. 10. *there perpetually doth abide in glory, until he shall*
 2 Thes. i. 7. *thence return hither to judge the world, we must*
 1 Cor. xv. 47. *not suppose him to be any where corporally upon*
 Phil. i. 20. *earth. He is indeed every where by his Divinity*
 Rev. i. 7. *present with us ; he is also in his humanity present*
 Matt. xxiv. *to our faith, to our memory, to our affection¹ ; he is*
 30. *therein also present by mysterious representation, by*
 (Εἰς ἀπάντησιν Κυρίου. *spiritual efficacy, by general inspection and influence*
 1 Thes. iv. *upon his church ; but in body, as we are absent*
 17.) *from him, so is he likewise separated from us ; we*
 Παρουσία. *must depart hence, that we may be with him, in*
 Ἐπιφάνεια. *the place whither he is gone to prepare for us.*
 Phil. i. 23. *Who shall ascend into heaven, to bring Christ*
 1 Thes. iv. *down thence ? saith St. Paul, intimating where he*
 17. *doth immoveably abide, in exclusion to all other*
 Rom. x. 6.

¹ Secundum majestatem suam, secundum providentiam, secundum ineffabilem et invisibilem gratiam impletur quod ab eo dictum est, Ecce ego vobiscum——secundum carnem vero—non semper habebitis me vobiscum. Aug. in Joh. Tract. 50.

places. These things (beside many other strong reasons) if we do consider, it will suffice to guard us from those rampant absurdities, which so long, with such impudence and such violence, have outbraved plain reason and sense. But to leave this, and to come to more practical applications.

2. Is Christ ascended and advanced to this glorious eminency at God's right hand? Then let us answerably behave ourselves toward him, rendering him the honour and worship, the fear and reverence, the service and obedience suitable and due to that his state. In regard hereto all the *angels of God* are commanded *to adore him*; and they willingly submit thereto, acknowledging him to deserve the highest worship; *Every creature* (it is in the Revelation) *in heaven, in earth, and under the earth*, doth in its way send up acclamations of blessing and praise unto him. And shall we then refuse or neglect to do the like? we, who of all creatures in equity and gratitude are most obliged, who in reason and interest are most concerned to honour him, as ourselves receiving most honour and advantage from his exaltation? Shall we be backward in yielding obedience to him, who is in nature so nearly related to us, and in affection so well disposed toward us; who, out of tender good-will toward us, hath undertaken this high charge, and exerciseth it with design to do us good; who therefore especially is pleased to sit at the helm, that he may protect us from all the enemies of our welfare, and that he may settle us in the enjoyment of happiness? Shall we dare to oppose his will, and not dread to displease him, to whom *all power in heaven and earth is given*; whose will is executed by the irresistible right hand of God; who

SERM.
XXXI.

Heb. i. 6.

Rev. v. 12,
13.

Matt.
xxviii. 18.

SERM. therefore can easily check us in our bad courses, and
 XXXI. will surely chastise us for our disobedience? We do
 plainly hereby incur the heinous guilt, and shall surely
 undergo the grievous punishment, of rebellion; this
 being the sentence which, refusing subjection to him,
 we shall one day hear and feel; *Those mine enemies,*
that would not have me reign over them, bring them
hither, and slay them before me.

Luke xix.
 27.

3. These points do afford ground and matter of great joy and comfort to us. Have we not cause to rejoice, that our Lord hath obtained so absolute and glorious a victory over all our cruel enemies? Should we not with joyful gratulation applaud the triumphs of goodness over wickedness, of charity over malice, of mercy over wrath, of life and happiness over death and misery? Is it not matter of huge satisfaction that one of our kind and kindred, who beareth toward us the bowels of a man and the affection of a brother, who hath yielded so wonderful expressions of good-will and charity toward us, who so loved us as to lay down his life for us, is raised to such preferment? Shall we not be pleased, that we have so good a friend in so high place and so great power; or that he who is so willing, is also so able to do us good? Have we not great cause to acquiesce in our subjection to so just, so mild, so gracious a Governor; *the sceptre of whose kingdom is a right sceptre, whose yoke is easy, and burden light?* Shall we not be glad, considering that we have so merciful and so kind an intercessor always resident with God, always ready to do good offices for us at the throne of grace? Considering this, what is there that can be or happen in the world that should displease, discourage, or disturb us? What enemies should we fear, since all

our enemies lie prostrate under his feet? What good SERM. XXXI.
 can we fear to want, since all things are at his disposal, and all good is dispensed by him? What events should trouble us, since all things are managed and ordered by his good hand? Will he suffer any thing to hurt us? Will he see us need any convenience? Will he let us be oppressed by any mischief or distress, whose office it is and continual care to protect and succour us? Have we not, in contemplation of these things, abundant reason to comply with that precept, of *rejoicing in the Lord always*? Be our case in this world what it will, considering where Phil. iv. 4. iii. 1. our Lord is, we have great cause to be cheerful, according to that injunction of our Lord, enforced by this consideration; *In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome* John xvi. 33. *the world.*

4. The consideration of these things serveth to cherish and strengthen all kind of faith and hope in us. If the resurrection of our Saviour might beget in us a strong persuasion concerning the truth of our Lord's doctrine, and *a lively hope* of salvation from his undertakings and performances for us, his ascension and session in glory (confirmed by the same indubitable testimonies and authorities) must needs nourish, improve, and corroborate them. We cannot surely distrust the accomplishment of any promises declared by him, we cannot despair of receiving any good from him, who is ascended into heaven, and sitteth at the right hand of divine wisdom and divine power, thence viewing all things done here, thence ordering all things every where for the advantage of those who love him and trust in him.

SERM. It especially doth serve to quicken in us that
 XXXI. *blessed hope*, as St. Paul calleth it, of a joyful and
 Tit. ii. 13. happy rest after the troubles and sorrows of this
 Heb. vi. 19. wretched life; *which hope we have as an anchor of
 the soul, both sure and steadfast, and which enter-
 eth into that within the veil; where the forerunner
 is for us entered, even Jesus, made an high priest
 for ever after the order of Melchizedek.*

5. These points do likewise serve to excite and
 encourage our devotion: for having such a mediator
 in heaven, so near God's presence, so much in God's
 favour; having so good and sure a friend at court,
 having such a *Master of requests* ever ready to
 present up, to recommend, and to further our peti-
 tions, what should deter, what should anywise with-
 hold us from cheerfully, upon all occasions, by him
 addressing ourselves to God? We may therefore, as
 Heb. iv. 16. we are exhorted by the apostle, *come to the throne
 of grace with boldness, that we may receive mercy,
 and find grace for seasonable aid.* We cannot,
 considering this, anywise doubt of those promises
 being effectually made good to us; *Whatever ye
 shall ask in prayer, believing, ye shall receive;
 whatsoever ye ask in my name, that will I do.*
 Matt. xxi. 22. vii. 8.
 Mark xi. 24.
 1 John v. 14.
 John xiv. 13. xv. 7.
 xvi. 23.
 There is nothing which he, enjoying such power,
 cannot do for us; and there is nothing which he, our
 loving and merciful Brother, will not do, that is good
 for us, if we do with humble confidence apply our-
 selves to him for it. And what greater incitement
 can there be to devotion, than an assurance so firmly
 grounded of fair acceptance and happy success there-
 of? Yea, what an extreme folly, what a huge crime
 is it, not to make use of such an advantage, not by so

obliging an inducement to be moved to a constant SERM.
practice of this so beneficial and sweet kind of duties? XXXI.

6. It may encourage us to all kind of obedience, to consider what a high pitch of eternal glory and dignity our Lord hath obtained, in regard to his obedience, and as a pledge of like recompense designed to us, if we tread in his footsteps, *running the race that is set before us, and looking up unto Jesus, who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, and is set at the right hand of the throne of God.* As God, in respect to what he should perform, did offer to him so high a promotion; so doth he likewise, upon condition of our obedience to his commandments, oblige himself to put us into a like excellent and happy state: so our Lord himself declared, when he said, *I covenant to* Luke xxii.
you a kingdom, as my Father covenanted to me a ^{29.}
kingdom: it goeth before, *Ye are they which have* Rev. i. 6.
continued with me in my temptations: there is the ^{v. 10.}
condition, faithful and constant adherence to Christ in doing and suffering; upon performance of which condition our Lord tendereth that glorious reward of an eternal kingdom: and the divine covenant being thus effectually fulfilled unto him, doth ascertain us, that his overture will likewise be made good to us; *It is, saith St. Paul, a faithful saying,* (that is, a ^{2 Tim. ii.}
word upon which we may confidently rely,) *if we* ^{11, 12.}
be dead with him, (dead to sin and vanity,) *we shall also live with him,* (live with him in glory and joy;) *if we endure,* (or persevere in obedience and patience after him,) *we shall also reign with him:* and, *To* Rev. iii. 21.
him (saith our Lord in the Revelation) *that overcometh will I grant to sit with me on my throne,*

SERM. *even as I also overcame, and am set down with my*
 XXXI. *Father on his throne.*

7. Lastly, the consideration of these points should elevate our thoughts and affections from these inferior things here (the vain and base things of this world) unto heavenly things; according to that of Col. iii. 1. St. Paul; *If ye be risen with Christ, seek the things above, where Christ is sitting at the right hand of God.* To the head of our body we should be joined; continually deriving sense and motion, direction and activity from him: where the master of our family is, there should our minds be, constantly attentive to his pleasure, and ready to serve him; where the city is, whose denizens we are, and where our final rest must be, there should our thoughts be, careful to observe the laws and orders, Heb. xi. 16. that we may enjoy the immunities and privileges thereof; in that country, where only we have any good estate, or valuable concernment, there our mind should be, studying to secure and improve our interest therein: our resolution should be conformable to Pa. cxxi. 1. that of the holy Psalmist; *I will lift up mine eyes to the hills, from whence cometh my help.* Christ Col. iii. 4. Gal. ii. 20. is our life, saith St. Paul; and shall our souls be 1 Tim. i. 1. parted from our life? Christ, saith he again, is our Col. i. 27. hope; and shall our mind and hope be asunder? Christ is the principal object of our love, of our trust, of our joy, of all our best affections; and shall our affections be severed from their best objects? By his being in heaven all our treasure becometh there; *and where our treasure is, there* (if we apprehend and believe rightly, there naturally) *our hearts will be also*: if they be not, it is a sign we

Animus
est, ubi
amat.

Take him not for our best treasure. *We do in our* SERM.
XXXI.
bodies sojourn from the Lord, as St. Paul saith; 2 Cor. v. 6.
but in our spirits we may and should be ever present, ever conversant with him; contemplating him with an eye of faith, fastening our love upon him, reposing our confidence in him, directing our prayers and thanksgivings to him; meditating upon his good laws, his gracious promises, his holy life, and his merciful performances for us. We should not, by fixing our hearts and desires upon earthly things, (upon the vain delights, the sordid interests, the fallacious and empty glories, the sinful enjoyments here,) nor by a dull and careless neglect of heavenly things, avert, estrange, or separate ourselves wholly from him. No, *sursum corda*, let us, unloosing our hearts from these things, and with them soaring upward, follow and adhere to our Lord; so shall we anticipate that blessed future state, so shall we assure to ourselves the possession of heaven, so here enjoying our Lord in affection, we shall hereafter obtain a perfect fruition of his glorious and blissful presence; the which God of his mercy by his grace vouchsafe us, through the same our ever blessed Saviour; to whom be for ever all glory and praise. *Amen.*

O God the King of glory, who hast exalted thine own Son Jesus Christ with great triumph unto thy kingdom in heaven; we beseech thee leave us not comfortless, but send thine Holy Ghost to comfort us, and exalt us to the same place, whither our Saviour Christ is gone before; who liveth and reigneth with thee and the Holy Ghost, one God, world without end. Amen.

From thence he shall come to judge the Quick
and the Dead.

S E R M O N XXXII.

THE REASONABLENESS AND EQUITY OF A
FUTURE JUDGMENT.

ECCLES. iii. 17.

*I said in my heart, God shall judge the righteous and the
wicked.*

SERM. XXXII. **T**HESE words are the result of a serious contem-
plation upon the state of human affairs and common
occurrences in this world: the Royal Philosopher
*having, as he telleth us, given his heart to seek and
search out by wisdom concerning all things that
were done under heaven; what was the proper na-
ture, what the just price of each thing; what real
benefit or solid comfort each did afford; how every
person did fare in the pursuit and success of his de-
signs; did, after full examination and careful balancing
all things resolve upon such conclusions as these:*

Eccles. i.
8. ii. 11.

That no kind of undertaking here did in effect
yield any considerable profit or complete satisfaction,
but all in the issue did prove vain and vexatious.

Eccles. ii.
11. ix. 11.
xi. 6.

That no man from his care and industry, in any
course of life, could promise himself any certain suc-
cess, or reap answerable reward.

That although between wisdom and folly (or between goodness and wickedness) there is some intrinsic difference of worth, (*one excelling the other, as light doth excel darkness,*) yet, as to external advantages, and as to final event here, there is no great odds discernible; for that events (prosperous and adverse) did appear to fall out, not according to the qualifications or to the practices of men, but indifferently, according to the swinge of *time and chance*; and for that death and oblivion alike do seize upon all; so that apparently, in that respect, *a man hath no preeminence over a beast.*

SERM.
XXXII.

Eccles. ii.
13.

Eccles. ii.
15. vii. 15.
ix. 1, 11.

Eccles. ii.
16. iii. 19.

That in common life nothing doth appear better, than for a man, with the best advantage he can, to enjoy ordinary sensible delights and comforts, which his condition doth afford.

Eccles. ii.
24. iii. 12.
v. 18. viii.
15. xi. 10.

That in regard to the present things here, life were not desirable to any man, the inconveniences and troubles thereof outweighing its benefits; so that even the wisest, greatest, and happiest persons (such as he himself was) had cause *to hate life, and all their labour which they had taken under the sun.*

Eccles. iv.
2, 3. ii. 17,
18.

That the mind and affection of God toward men are very reserved; the course of Providence very abstruse, the reason of events unsearchable to the wit or study of men; so that we can hardly from appearances here descry any conspicuous marks of God's favour or his displeasure.

Eccles. iii.
11. viii. 17.
xi. 5.

From these observations, as from so many arguments, he doth both here and elsewhere in several places of this book infer, that there shall be a divine judgment, passing upon all men, both righteous and wicked; whereby these seeming incongruities in the

Eccles. xi.
9. xii. 14.
v. 8. vii.
12. vii. 18.

SERM. providential administration of things shall be salved;
 XXXII. and in regard whereto our present opinions of things
 may be rectified: this he interposeth here; *I said
 in my heart*, (that is, by the consideration of things
 I was persuaded,) *that God shall judge the right-
 eous and the wicked*: this he ever now and then
 toucheth, as incident to his meditations: this he in
 the close of all proposeth as the grand inducement
 to piety, and obedience to God's commandments;
 Eccles. xii. *For God shall bring every work into judgment,*
 14. *with every secret thing, whether it be good or whe-
 ther it be evil.*

This judgment he expresseth indefinitely, so as
 not to determine the kind or time thereof; and as
 to the absolute force of his words, it may signify the
 decree of God, to reward or punish men here in this
 life, according to their deserts, the which in holy
 scripture is commonly styled God's judgment; but
 the force of his arguments (or at least of some of
 them) plainly doth infer a future judgment after
 death; and so therefore I shall take his sense to
 be, grounding thereon this observation; That from
 a wise consideration of human affairs, and obvious
 events here, we may collect the reasonableness, the
 equity, the expediency, the moral or prudential ne-
 cessity of a future judgment, according to which
 men shall receive due recompenses, answerable to
 their demeanour in this life: this observation it
 shall be my endeavour by God's help to declare, and
 prove by arguments deduced from the reason and
 nature of things.

First then, I say, it is reasonable and equal, that
 there should be a future judgment: this will appear
 upon many accounts.

1. Seeing all men come hither without any know- SERM.
XXXII.
ledge or choice, having their life, as it were, ob-
truded on them; and seeing ordinarily (according
to the general complaints of men) the pains of this
life do overbalance its pleasures; so that it seemeth,
in regard to what men find here, a punishment to
be born^a; it seemeth also thence equal, that men
should be put into a capacity, upon their good be- Eccles. iv.
3, 4. ii. 17.
Job iii. 3.
haviour in this troublesome state, of a better state xv. 10.
Jer. xx. 14,
&c.
hereafter, in compensation for what they endure
here; otherwise God might seem not to have dealt
fairly with his creatures; and we might have some
colour to expostulate with Job; *Wherefore is light* Job iii. 20,
given to him that is in misery, and life to the bit- 21.
ter in soul? Why died I not from the womb? why
did I not give up the ghost when I came out of the
belly?

2. Seeing man is endued with a free choice and
power over his actions, and thence by a good or bad
use thereof is capable of deserving well or ill, it is
just that a respective difference be made, according
to due estimation; and that men answerably should
be proceeded with either here or hereafter, reaping Job iv. 8.
the fruits of what they voluntarily did sow. There Prov. xxii.
8.
is a natural relation between merits and rewards, Jer. xxxii.
19.
which must come under taxation, and find effect,
otherwise there would be no such thing as justice
and injustice in the world.

3. Seeing there is a natural subordination of man
to God, as of a creature to his maker, as of a subject

^a Vitam non mehercule quisquam accepisset, nisi daretur in-
sciis. Sen. ad Marc. 22.

Nemini contigit impune nasci. Ibid. 15.

SERM. or servant to his lord, as of a client or dependent to
 XXXII. his patron, protector, and benefactor, whence correspondent obligations do result; it is just that men should be accountable for the performance, and for the violation or neglect of them; so as accordingly either to receive approbation, or to be obliged to render satisfaction; respectively, as they have done right, and paid respect to God, or as they have offered to wrong and dishonour him; otherwise those relations would seem vain and idle.

4. Seeing also there are natural relations of men to one another, and frequent transactions between them, founding several duties of humanity and justice; the which may be observed or transgressed; so that some men shall do, and others suffer much injury, without any possible redress from elsewhere, it is fit that a reference of such cases should be made to the common Patron of right, and that by him they should be so decided, that due amends should be made to one party, and fit correction inflicted on the other; according to that of St. Paul; *It is a righteous thing with God to recompense tribulation to them that trouble you; and to you who are troubled rest with us, in the revelation of our Lord Jesus.*

2 Thess. i.
6, 7.

5. Whereas also there are many secret good actions, many inward good dispositions, good wishes, and good purposes, unto which here no honour, no profit, no pleasure, no sort of benefit is annexed, or indeed well can be, (they being indiscernible to men;) there are likewise many bad practices and designs concealed, or disguised, so as necessarily to pass away without any check, any disgrace, any damage or chastisement here; it is most equal that

hereafter both these kinds should be disclosed, and obtain answerable recompense. SERM.
XXXII.

6. There are also persons whom, although committing grievous wrong, oppression, and other heinous misdemeanours, offensive to God and man, yet, by reason of the inviolable sacredness of their authority, or because of their uncontrollable power, no justice here can reach, nor punishment can touch; who therefore should be reserved to the impartial and irresistible judgment of God; and fit it is, that (for satisfaction of justice, and distinction of such, from those who contrariwise behave themselves well) a Tophet should be prepared for them.

Isa. xxx.
33.

7. Upon these and the like accounts, equity requireth that a judgment should pass upon the deeds of men; and thereto the common opinions of men and the private dictates of each man's conscience do attest: for all men seeing any person to demean himself brutishly and unworthily, committing heinous disorders and outrages, are apt to pronounce it unfit that such an one should escape with impunity; likewise when innocent and good persons (who do no harm, and do what good they can) do suffer, or do enjoy no benefit thence, it is a pity, will any indifferent person be ready to say, that such a man's case should not be considered; that some reparation or some reward should not be allotted to him: the which apprehensions of men are in effect the verdicts of common sense concerning the equity of a judgment to be.

8. Every man also having committed any notable misdemeanour, (repugnant to piety, justice, or sobriety,) doth naturally accuse himself for it, doth in his heart sentence himself to deserve punishment,

SERM. and doth stand possessed with a dread thereof; so,
XXXII. even unwillingly, avouching the equity of a judgment, and by a forcible instinct presaging it to come. As likewise he that hath performed any virtuous or honest action, doth not only rest satisfied therein, but hath raised in him a strong hope of benefit to come from heaven in recompense thereof; the which apprehensions and hopes do involve an opinion, that it is reasonable a judgment should be. All which considerations (seeing it is manifest that there is not generally or frequently any such exact judgment or dispensation of rewards in this life, nor perhaps, without changing the whole frame of things and course of Providence, can well be) do therefore infer the fitness and equity of a future judgment.

It is further, upon divers accounts, requisite and needful, that men should have an apprehension concerning such a judgment appointed by God, and consequently that such an one should really be. It is requisite toward the good conduct of human affairs here, or to engage men to the practice of virtue; it is necessary to the maintaining any belief concerning religion, or sense of piety: without it therefore no convenient society among men can be well upheld.

1. It is, I say, needful to engage men upon the practice of any virtue, and to restrain them from any vice; for that indeed without it, no consideration of reason, no provision of law here, can be much available to those purposes. He that will consider the nature of men, or observe their common practice, (marking what apprehensions usually steer them, what inclinations sway them, in their elections and pursuits of things,) shall, I suppose, find, that from an invincible principle of self-love, or sen-

suality, deriving itself through all their motions of SERM.
soul, and into all their actions of life, men generally XXXII.
do so strongly propend to the enjoyment of present
sensible goods, that nothing but a presumption of
some considerable benefit to be obtained by absti-
nence from them, or of some grievous mischief con-
sequent on the embracing them, can withhold them
from pursuing such enjoyment. From hence (see-
ing fancy, reason, and experience do all prompt men
to a foresight of events, and force them to some re-
gard of the consequences of things) it followeth, that
hope and fear are the main springs which set on
work all the wheels of human action ; so that any
matter being propounded, if men can hope that it
will yield pleasant or profitable (that is, tending to
pleasant) fruits, they will undertake it ; if they do
fear its consequences will be distasteful or hurtful,
they will decline it : very rare it is to find, that the
love or liking of a thing, as in itself amiable to the
mind, or suitable to reason, doth incline men thereto ;
that honest things, bare of present advantages, and
barren of hopeful fruits, are heartily pursued ; that
any thing otherwise averteth us from itself, than as
immediately presenting some mischief, or danger-
ously threatening it. When goodness therefore doth
clash with interest or pleasure, *human wisdom* (the Rom. viii.6.
φρόνημα τῆς σαρκὸς, *natural sense of the flesh*, which
St. Paul speaketh of as opposite to virtue) will dis-
pose men to take part with these ; and, except some
higher aid come in to succour goodness, it is odds
that ever they will prevail over it. If it do appear,
that virtue can pay men well for their pains, they
perhaps may be her servants ; but they will hardly
wait on her in pure courtesy, or work in her service

SERM. for nothing ; if she bringeth visibly a good dowry
 XXXII. with her, she may be courted ; but her mere beauty,
 or worth, will draw few suitors to her : who will
 forego sensible pleasures, or wave substantial profit ;
 who will reject the overtures of power, or honour, for
 her sake ? And if vice, how ill soever it look or lear,
 do offer fairly, how many persons will be so nice or
 squeamish, as merely out of fancy, or in despite to
 her, to refuse or renounce her ? In short, as men
 are baited with pleasure or bribed with profit, so
 they pursue, as they are stung with pain or curbed
 with fear, so they eschew things ; it is a gift (or a
 specious appearance of some good offered) which
 perpetually moveth the greatest part, which often
blindeth the eyes and perverteth the heart of the
 wisest sort of men.

Deut. xvi.
 19.
 Exod. xxiii.
 8.

It is further to common sense very obvious, that
 this life cannot promise or afford to virtue any re-
 wards apparently so considerable, as in the common
 judgment of men to overpoise the pains and difficul-
 ties required to the procurement and maintenance
 thereof, (the pains and difficulties to be overcome
 in mastering stubborn inclinations, in moderating
 greedy appetites, in restraining violent passions, in
 encountering frequent and strong temptations, in
 abstracting our minds and affections from sensible
 things, in assiduous watching over our thoughts,
 words, and actions,) together with the manifold in-
 conveniences, crosses, and troubles, which do attend
 the strict practice of virtue ; that likewise here there
 are not ordinarily any such discouragements affixed
 to vice, which do much weigh down the pleasures
 with which it is tempered, and the advantages wait-
 ing on it.

As for human laws, made to encourage and re-
quite virtue, or to check and chastise vice, it is also
manifest that they do extend to cases in comparison
very few; and that even as to particulars which
they touch, they are so easily eluded, or evaded, that
without intrenching upon them, at least without in-
curring their edge, or coming within the verge of their
correction, men may be very bad in themselves, ex-
tremely injurious to their neighbours, and hugely
troublesome to the world; so that such laws hardly
can make tolerable citizens, much less thoroughly
good men, even in exterior demeanour and dealing.
However, no laws of men can touch internal acts of
virtue or vice; they may sometimes bind our hands,
or bridle our mouths, or shackle our feet; but they
cannot stop our thoughts, they cannot still our pas-
sions, they cannot bend or break our inclinations:
these things are beyond the reach of their cognizance,
of their command, of their compulsion, or their cor-
rection: they cannot therefore render men truly
good, or hinder them from being bad.

Upon which and the like considerations it is plain
enough, that, setting aside the persuasion of a future
judgment, all other incentives to virtue and restraints
from vice, which either common experience suggest-
eth, or philosophical speculation may devise, are very
weak and faint, and cannot reasonably promise con-
siderable effect: the native beauty and intrinsic
worth of virtue, or its suitableness to reason and the
dignity of our nature; the grace and commendation
with which it decketh the practisers of it; its good-
ly, pleasant, and wholesome fruits of manifold con-
veniences, of health to soul and body, of peace and
amity among men, of tranquillity and satisfaction in

SERM. mind, if they do not reach beyond this transitory
 XXXII. life, cannot to the common apprehensions of men appear so considerable, or prove so efficacious, as to engage men closely and constantly to adhere thereto. Neither will the worst of evils innate or accessory to vice, (its essential deformity and turpitude, or its being disagreeable to reason and dishonourable to human nature, together with the distempers, the damages, the disgraces, the disturbances apt to sprout from it,) if no more hereafter is to be feared in consequence thereof, be sufficient to deter or discourage men from it: the peril of death itself (the worst evil which men pretend to inflict, and that which our nature seemeth most to abhor) will not import much toward the diverting indigent, ambitious, or passionate men from the most desperately wicked attempts: it is the observation of Cicero, from which he inferreth the need of supposing future punishments, as the only effectual restraints from such actions; *That, saith he, there might be in this life some fear laid upon wicked men, those ancients did think good, that there should be some punishments appointed in hell for impious persons; because indeed they understood, that, setting these apart, death itself was not to be feared*^b.

Cic. de Fin.
 iii. Tusc. 5.

There have been indeed vented such fine and stately notions as these: that reason simply, however attended, doth challenge obedience to itself;

Cic. de Leg
 I.
 Sen. de
 Clem. i. 1.

that virtue is abundantly its own reward, and vice a complete punishment to itself; that we should not

^b Ut aliqua in vita formido improbis esset, apud inferos ejusmodi quædam illi antiqui supplicia impiis constituta esse voluerunt, quod videlicet intelligebant his remotis non esse mortem ipsam pertimescendam. Cic. Catil. 4.

in our practice be mercenary, regarding what profit or detriment will accrue from it, but should be good absolutely and gratis; that moral goods are the only desirable goods, and moral evils the only evils to be grieved at; that nothing can happen amiss to good men, and whatever their condition is, they are perfectly happy; that nothing can truly benefit ill men, or exempt them from misery: ^cbut these and the like notions, frequently occurring in philosophers, as they are, (being rightly understood, or taken in a qualified sense,) supposing religion and a future judgment, evidently reasonable and true; (as also perhaps, even abstracting from that supposition, they may have in them a kind of slim and dusky truth, discernible to one in a thousand, who is very sharp-sighted, and looketh most wistly on them; as they may be relished by a few persons of very refined spirit, or of special improvement;) so to the common herd of people, (unto whose inclinations and capacities it is fit that the general rules of practice, and the most effectual inducements thereto, should be squared,) to men immersed in the cares, the toils, and the temptations of the world, they plainly are unsuitable; their grosser conceit cannot apprehend, their more rugged disposition will not admit such fine notions; they in effect, by the generality of men, have been slighted and exploded, as incongruous to common sense and experience, as the dictates of affectation or simplicity; as the dreams of idle persons, addicted to speculation, and regardless of the

SERM.
XXXII.

^c Neque bona, neque mala quæ vulgus putet; multos qui conflictari adversis videantur beatos, ac plerosque quanquam magnas per opes miserrimos, si illi gravem fortunam constanter tolerant, hi prospera inconsulte utantur. *Tac. Ann. 6.*

SERM. world, such as it really doth exist, and will ever per-
XXXII. sist, while men continue endued with the same natural inclinations and affections : so that from such notions little succour can be expected toward promoting virtue, or restraining vice in the world.

Upon these considerations the necessity or great usefulness of supposing a judgment doth appear; that it being cast into the scales may, to the common understanding of men, evidently render virtue more considerable and eligible than vice; as even in consequential profit and pleasure far surpassing it.

2. Whence manifestly the same supposition is also needful for the welfare of human society ; the which, without the practice of justice, fidelity, and other virtues, can hardly subsist^d; without which practice indeed, a body of men would be worse than a company of wolves or foxes ; and vain it were to think, that it can any where stand without conscience; and conscience, without fear checking, or hope spurring it on, can be no more than a name : all societies therefore, we may see, have been fain to call in the notion of a future judgment to the aid of justice, and support of fidelity ; obliging men to bind their testimonies by oaths, and plight their troth by sacraments ; implying a dread of that divine judgment to which they solemnly do then appeal and make themselves accountâble.

3. But further, the persuasion concerning a future judgment is, upon peculiar accounts, most requisite to the support of religion and defence of piety.

It is certain, that no authority, upon whatever

^d Deos agere curam rerum humanarum, ex usu vitæ est ; pœnasque maleficii, aliquando seras, nunquam autem irritas esse, &c. *Plin.* xi. 7.

reason or equity grounded, if it do not present competent encouragements to obedient subjects, if it do not hold forth an armed hand, menacing chastisement to the refractory, will signify any thing, or be able to sustain the respect due to it; that no laws, however in themselves equal or commodious, if a certain account or trial, backed with a dispensation of valuable rewards, and infliction of formidable punishments, be not annexed to them, will obtain any force, so as to be observed or regarded; that no obligation whatever, of duty or gratitude, will prevail upon men, if they do not apprehend themselves under a constraint to render an account, so as to be forced either to do reason, or to suffer for not doing it: so it is generally; and so it is even in regard to God, the sovereign King and Governor of the world, as piety doth suppose him: his authority will never be maintained, his laws will never be obeyed, the duties towards him will never be minded, without influence upon the hopes and fears of men; they will not yield to him any reverence, they will not regard his commands, if they may not from their respect and obedience expect good benefit, if they dread not a sore vengeance for their rebellion or neglect; nothing to them will seem more fond, than to serve him, who doth not well requite for the performance, than to revere him, who doth not soundly punish for the neglect of his service.

Forasmuch also as piety doth require duties somewhat high and hard, as much crossing the natural inclinations and desires of men, it peculiarly, for the overruling such aversion, doth need answerably great encouragements to the practice, and determents from the transgression of what it requireth; upon which

SERM. score it may also further appear, that temporal judg-
XXXII. ments, and recompenses here, are not sufficient to procure a due obedience to the laws of piety; for how indeed can he, that for the sake of piety doth undergo disgrace, loss, or pain, expect to be satisfied here? What other benefits can he presume upon beside those which he doth presently forfeit?

Of this particular God may seem designedly to have set before us a pregnant instance or experiment worthy our consideration: God in a very notorious and affecting manner declared his will and law to the Jews; and, to engage them to obedience, he not only recommended it to them as very good in itself, and very convenient for them to observe; but he enforced it with promises of the greatest blessings concerning this life, that men are capable of, if they should obey; and with curses or menaces of the most dismal mischiefs imaginable in reference to this life, in case of disobedience; and that he both could and would in both respects make his word good, he did by miraculous dispensation of signal mercies and judgments most evidently shew and assure them: yet what was the effect? it was, that, as the Psalm-

Ps. cvi. 24,
 25. lxxviii.
 37, 56.

ist expresseth it, *They despised the pleasant land— and hearkened not unto the voice of the Lord: their heart was not right with God, neither were they steadfast in his covenant: they tempted and provoked the most high God, and kept not his testimonies*: they did not so value those benefits, they could not so dread those penalties, as in regard to them to persist for any time in a steady obedience; as not easily in despite of them to be drawn into the worst of crimes prohibited to them: the sweetest enjoyment of those good things could not hold

them close to their duty, nor was the saddest smart SERM.
of those evils able to reclaim them from sin; but XXXII.
even that very people (we may further observe)
having afterward (by sparks of light darted from
the prophets, or otherwise) obtained some clearer
notions and stronger persuasions concerning a future
state, and rewards dispensed therein of higher con-
sideration than any temporal ones here, became
thereupon very constant and resolute in observance
of their law; they proved valiant and fierce in de-
fence thereof; they chose rather to endure the
most grievous afflictions, than to transgress it; as
the history of the Maccabees doth inform us: they,
as the Apostle to the Hebrews remarked of them,
waxed valiant in fight, and turned to flight
the armies of the aliens: they also were tortured,
not accepting a deliverance; that they might ob-
tain a better resurrection: this hope it was, which
then did raise them to so vigorous resolution, and
so cheerful patience: from the same apostle we also
learn, that it was a sense of our being here in a
transitory state, and *having an eye to the recom-*
pense of reward after this life, which did engage
the good patriarchs and prophets of the Old Testa-
ment so readily upon all occasions to comply with
God's will, and to perform the most difficult com-
mands by him imposed on them: these things they
did, *not*, saith the apostle, *having* indeed *received*
the promises, (that is, not having the evangelical
promises concerning a future life in so formal and
express a manner, as we now have, proposed to
them,) *but yet having seen them afar off, and hav-*
ing been persuaded of them, and having embraced
them, and having (in declaration of those percep-

2 Mac. vi.
26. vii. 23,
29.

Heb. xi. 34.

35.

Heb. xi. 26.

Heb. xi. 13.

SERM. tions and persuasions) *confessed that they were*
 XXXII. *strangers and pilgrims upon earth.*

The like observation might be made even concerning the pagans, who, while the persuasions concerning judgments and rewards after this life were retained in common vogue, did live more innocently and virtuously; but after those generally were discarded, so that the satirist could say, that *scarce boys did believe any ghosts, or subterraneous judicatures*^c, then did all wickedness mainly prevail and overflow. Comparing which things we may discern, as the weakness of considerations merely regarding this present life, so the force of those which concern a future state, in order to the procuring obedience to God's law; supposing both entertained with the same faith or persuasion of mind: from whence the necessity of that judgment, which we speak of, toward the maintenance of piety doth appear.

Τὸ ἄρρον
 εἶπας, αἰτιά-
 σατο αὐτὸν θεός.
 Eurip.

But beyond these things this point is very needful, to secure the very foundations of all religion and piety, the existence of God, and his providence over human affairs: the belief of a Deity, according to any tolerable notion thereof, and of a providence over us, apt to engage or encourage us to religious performances, without supposition of a judgment, and of a dispensation according to it of future rewards, cannot be well maintained; the objections assailing them would strike too hard, and pierce too deep, were we not furnished with this good shield to receive and repel them.

Eccles. ix.

To find that of the Preacher certified by experience; *No man knoweth either love or hatred by*

^c .Esse aliquos manes, et subterranea regna——

Vix pueri credunt.

Juv. Sat. ii.

all that is before him. All things come alike to all: there is one event to the righteous, and to the wicked; to the clean, and to the unclean; to him that sacrificeth, and to him that sacrificeth not: as is the good, so is the sinner; and he that sweareth, as he that sweareth not. SERM.
XXXII.

To behold virtue grovelling on the ground, and trampled on; while vice is mounted on the perch, Eccles. x. 4. and sitteth proudly domineering; to view innocence and right sadly groaning under oppression, while fraud and violence do triumph and insult; which sights are obvious in the world; as the Preacher observed; *I saw, said he, under the sun, the place of judgment, that wickedness was there; and the place of righteousness, that iniquity was there: I considered all the oppressions that are done under the sun; and behold the tears of such as were oppressed; on the side of their oppressors there was power; but they had no comforter: so did Job also take notice, when he said, The tabernacles of the robbers prosper, and they that provoke God are secure: and the Psalmist complained of wicked oppressors; They are enclosed in their own fat, and with their mouth they speak proudly: and the prophet Malachi; Now we call the proud happy; yea, they that work wickedness are set up; yea, they that tempt God are delivered.* Eccles. iii. 16.
Eccles. iv. 1.
Job xii. 7.
Ps. xvii. 10.
Mal. iii. 15.

† To observe it frequently to happen, that most innocent and virtuous persons do conflict all their days with hardships and crosses, and sometime after all

† Sed cum res hominum tanta caligine volvi
Adspicerem, lætosque diu florere nocentes,
Versarique pios, rursus labefacta cadebat
Religio, &c. Claud. in Ruff. 1. init.

SERM. die sadly in pain, and under ignominy; while per-
 XXXII. sons most outrageous in lewdness and iniquity do
 flourish and rant it out in a long undisturbed course
 of prosperity, and in the end depart hence fairly and
 quietly; according to that in Ecclesiastes; *There is*
 Eccles. vii. *a just man that perisheth in his righteousness, and*
 15. *there is a wicked man that prolongeth his life in*
wickedness: the former was the case of Socrates,
 of Phocion, of Regulus, of many other remarkably
 gallant and worthy persons; the latter, as Cicero
 observed, of Dionysius, who, after thirty years of
 unjust and cruel domination, in much splendour,
 died quietly in his bed^s.

Thus, I say, to see and consider, that commonly
 Eccles. viii. *to just men it happeneth according to the work of*
 14. *the wicked, and to wicked men according to the*
work of the righteous, as the Preacher speaketh,
 that here piety with its best friends do suffer deeply,
 and impiety with its worst abettors do notably thrive;
 yea, that not only good men suffer, but often suffer
 for being good, (from envy and malignity of men
 that hate goodness,) and that bad men not only pros-
 per, but prosper by their wickedness, (by their fraud
 and violence,) hath been a huge scandal to religion,
 which hath caused many to stumble, hath cast some
 quite down into the gulf of atheism or epicurism^h;

^s Dies deficiat si velim numerare, quibus bonis male evenit, nec minus si commemorem, quibus improbis optime. *Cic. de Nat. Deor.* 3.

Dionysius 30 annos tyrannus fuit opulentissimæ et beatissimæ civitatis—atque in suo lectulo mortuus. *Cic. ib.*

^h Improborum prosperitates, secundæque res redarguunt (ut Diogenes dicebat) vim omnem Deorum et potestatem. *Cic. de Nat. Deor.*

hath brought some men to doubt, hath induced others flatly to deny, that there is a God, (that is, a most wise, powerful, just, and good Being, every where present,) or that he being, doth preside over, or anywise concern himself in our affairs: from this source did flow all those impious conceits, which Seneca thus expresseth; *One objecteth to the gods neglect of us; another, iniquity; another casts them out beyond his world, and leaves them forlorn, as lazy and dull, without any light, or any work*ⁱ. From hence it hath been, that in all places and times there have been persons ready to say with those in the Psalms, *How doth God know? is there knowledge in the Most High? The Lord doth not see, neither doth the God of Jacob regard it: God hath forgotten; he hideth his face, and will never see it.*

SERM.
XXXII.

Vid. Luc.
in Jup.
Confut.
Plut. de
Placitis, &c.
Plin. xi. 7.

Psal. lxxiii.
11. xciv. 7.
x. 11.

^k And not only upon blind pagans and profane persons, but even upon the most pious of God's people these considerations have made impression, extorting from their hearts and mouths expostulations like that of Jeremiah; *Wherefore doth the way of the wicked prosper? wherefore are all they happy that deal very treacherously?* and that of Job, *Wherefore doth the wicked live, become old, and are mighty in power? their seed is established in*

^h Ἡ γὰρ μηκέθ' ἡγεῖσθαι θεοὺς, εἰ τὰδικ' ἔσται τῆς δίκης ὑπέρτερα.
Eurip. Elect.

ⁱ Alius illis objicit negligentiam nostri, alius iniquitatem; alius illos extra mundum suum projicit, et ignavos hebetesque illos sine luce, sine ullo opere destituit. Sen. de Benef. vii. 31.

^k Quippe sapientissimos veterum, quique sectam eorum æmulantur, diversos reperies; ac multis insitam opinionem non initia nostri, non finem, non denique homines Diis curæ; ideo creberima et tristia in bonos, læta apud deteriores esse. Tac. An. 6.

SERM. *their sight, their houses are safe from fear, neither*
 XXXII. *is the rod of God upon them—they spend their*
 days in wealth, and in a moment go down to the
 grave: and that, *Is it good unto thee that thou*
 Job x. 3. *shouldest oppress, that thou shouldest despise the*
work of thine hand, and shine upon the counsel
of the wicked? Such questions did this kind of ob-
 servations draw forth, and it shrewdly tempted them
 to a dissatisfaction in their pious practice, that they
 Psal. lxxiii. were ready to say with the Psalmist, *Verily I have*
 13. *cleansed my heart in vain, and washed my hands*
 Mal. iii. 14. *in innocency;* or with those in the prophet; *It is*
vain to serve God, and what profit is it that we
 Ps. lxxiii. 2. *mournfully before the Lord?* so that hence, *their*
feet were almost gone, and their steps had well
nigh slipped into a distrust of God's wise and just
 providence; they were moved to suspect that God
 did not indeed bear that special regard to goodness,
 and affection to good men, that great hatred of ini-
 quity, and displeasure toward the lovers of it, which
 religion supposeth, as the main grounds of piety:
 thus, I say, have men, both good and bad, upon such
 occasions been induced or tempted to doubt concern-
 ing those fundamental points; and that not without
 apparently weighty cause, admitting that all accounts
 are made up here in this life between God and men;
 or that there is no reckoning behind, to be adjusted
 in another world by divine justice and goodness;
 then indeed that saying, it is *a reproach to the*
*Deity that bad men do prosper*¹, and good men suf-
 fer, hath a plausible semblance of truth; then he
 that affirmed, *there was no God, and heaven to be*

¹ Θεῶν ὄνειδος τοὺς κακοὺς εἰδαιμονεῖν.

a void place, proving his assertion hence, that while he thus affirmed, he found himself in a good case^m, SERM.
XXXII.
did argue smartly; then Diagoras from an unpunished perjury collected probably, that God did not exist, or did not mind what was done here; for that being, and regarding things, he would not have endured himself to be so affronted, and those under his care so abusedⁿ; then had Dionysius some reason to justify his sacrilege by his prosperous navigation from committing it; and with fair colour Diogenes might say, that Harpalus's successful treachery and rapine did *testimonium dicere adversos deos*, bear testimony against the gods, as guilty of injustice or carelessness: these sort of discourses would, I say, upon excluding the supposition of future judgment, have some validity, or speciousness: and for want of that supposition we may observe the apologies for Providence, elaborately composed by some philosophers, to be very lame and unsatisfactory. But supposing a judgment hereafter designed by God, and a proceeding with all men according thereto, all difficulty in these cases vanisheth, all objections have plainly no moment or force: then God's present connivance, or patient indulgence toward wicked men will signify no more, than what most becometh him as God and governor of the world; his most excellent goodness and admirable clemency toward his creatures and subjects; in *waiting to be gra-* Rom. ii. 4.
ix. 22.
2 Pet. iii.
9, 15.

^m Nullos esse Deos, inane cœlum,
Affirmat Selius, probatque quod se
Factum, dum negat hæc, videt beatum. *Mart.* iv. 20.

ⁿ — Sunt nobis nulla profecto
Numina, cum cœlo rapiantur secula casu
Mentimur regnare Jovem, &c. *Luc.* vii. 445.

SERM. *cious*, and providing for their return to a better mind;
 XXXII. affording them time and means of reforming their
 minds and manners, that so they may escape the
 stroke of final vengeance : so in most cases ; and in
 some also signifying his wise justice, in suffering bad
 men to proceed forward to an inexcusable pitch of
 guilt, in order to their more clearly just condemna-
 tion and severe punishment hereafter ; that being
 Rom. ix. 22. *κατηρτισμένοι εἰς ἀπώλειαν*, *thoroughly fit*, as St. Paul
 Jer. xii. 3. *speaketh, or ripe for perdition ; being prepared, as*
 the prophet Jeremiah expresseth it, or *sanctified for*
the slaughter ; ° being by their present ease and
 abused prosperity become fat and fair, they may fall
 more proper victims to divine severity.

Then also from God's permitting good men to
 suffer, how smartly soever, nothing can be inferred
 prejudicial unto divine goodness or justice ; since
 they are thereby made fitter for, and do attain a
 surer title to, those excellent rewards, which he upon
 such trial and approbation of their virtues doth in-
 tend to confer upon them^p ; especially considering
 that afflictions are necessary, both as means of ren-
 dering men good, and as occasions of expressing
 their goodness, that scarce any virtue could subsist
 or could appear without them^q.

Vid Chrys.
ἀνδρ. α'.

There could be no such thing as patience, if there
 were no adversities to be endured ; no such thing
 as contentedness, if there were no wants to be felt ;
 no such thing as industry, if there were no pains to

^o Ἀγνισον αὐτοὺς εἰς ἡμέραν σφραγῆς αὐτῶν. LXX.

Ut victimæ saginantur, ut hostiæ coronantur. *Min. Fel.*

^p Justis quicquid malorum irrogatur, non est poena criminis, sed virtutis examen. *Aug.*

^q Experitur, indurat, sibi ipsum præparat. *Sen. de Prov. 1.*

be taken ; no such thing as humility, if sensible infirmities and crosses did not prompt us to sober thoughts, and shew us what we are^r. There would be no true wisdom, no clear knowledge of ourselves, or right judgment of things, without experiencing the worst half of things. We should never learn to master our passions, or temper our appetites, or wrest our inclinations to a compliance with reason, if that discipline were away, which the holy Psalmist intimateth, saying, *It is good for me that I have been afflicted, that I might learn thy statutes.* How much we do love God, how submissive we are to God's will, how little we do value these mean things here, we cannot otherwise than by willingly undergoing or patiently bearing afflictions, well express ; without it no sure trial of virtue can be, without it no excellent example of goodness had ever been. As therefore it is necessary that good men, even that they may be good, should suffer here ; so it is, supposing a future judgment, very just that they should do so, that they may acquire a title to the rewards following it ; rewards far outweighing the light afflictions they are put to endure here.

SERM.
XXXII.

Psal. cxix.
67, 71, 75.
No martyrs, if no persecution.

Magnum exemplum nisi mala fortuna non invenit.
Sen. de Prov. 3.
2 Cor. iv. 17.
Rom. viii. 18.
Matt. v. 12.

In reference therefore to the present impunity of bad men, and letting iniquity to prevail or to proceed here, that which cured David, Job, and Solomon, may satisfy us ; *going into the sanctuary, and understanding the end of those men ; considering, that the wicked is reserved to the day of destruction, and shall be brought out to the day of wrath ; that after all their jollity and pleasure, God for all*

Psal. lxxiii.
17.
Job xxi. 30.
Rom. ii. 5.
Eccles. xi 9.

^r Semper esse felicem, et sine morsu animi transire vitam, ignorare est rerum naturæ alteram partem. Sen. de Prov. 4.

SERM. *these things will bring them into judgment.* In re-
 XXXII. gard to the righteous being afflicted here, that of

²Thess. i. 5. St. Paul may suffice, saying of them, *It is a mani-
 fest instance of God's righteous judgment, that
 they may be made worthy of the kingdom of God,*

Luke vi. 22. *for which they suffer:* that of our Saviour,; *Blessed
 23. are ye, when men shall hate you, and shall re-
 proach you; rejoice ye in that day, and leap for
 joy; for, behold, your reward is great in heaven:*

Eccles. viii. that of Solomon; *Though a sinner do evil a hun-
 dred times, and his days be prolonged, yet surely
 12. I know that it shall be well with them that fear
 11. God.* In respect to both sorts of men, that of St.

²Pet. ii. 29. Peter will resolve all doubt; *God knoweth how to
 deliver the godly out of trials, and to reserve the
 unjust unto the day of judgment to be punished.*

All scores will be fully quitted by the execution of
 that sentence pronounced by our Judge himself, *The
 Matt. xxv. wicked shall go away into everlasting punishment,
 46. but the righteous into life eternal.*

This hypothesis doth indeed even to our common
 sense throughly solve most of those appearances in
 the course of things here, which otherwise might
 seem intricate or strange; clearing Providence from
 all misprisions, and satisfying our minds, so far as is
 needful, concerning the reasons of most occurrences
 here. From it we may learn,

That God in this great drama, made up of his
 providence and our free-will concurrently or inter-
 changeably acting, doth mean, in order to this ca-
 tastrophe or judgment in the last and chief act, to
 let men go on playing their parts undisturbedly, ac-
 cording to their inclinations and humours, yet with-
 in certain limits, and under the check of his hand,

in proper seasons, to prevent confusion of all inter-posing itself^s. SERM.
XXXII.

That it is not, therefore, fit now by open significations, either of approbation or dislike, often to interrupt the process of human actions; especially considering that the final doom concerning persons is not to be grounded upon single passages, or the particular acts of one time, but upon the whole body of action passing through the course of each man's part, in the place and time allotted to him; and that he who now acteth laudably may, before all is done, come to falter; he that now behaveth himself untowardly may afterward learn to do better, and in the end come off well.

That hence it is not to be wondered, that God here should be somewhat reserved in dispensing testimonies of favour to those who at present do seem good, somewhat sparing in declaring wrath toward those who now appear bad; that he should not miraculously pour down golden showers on the heads of the righteous, nor send *fire from heaven*, as angry man would have him, upon every provocation, to consume sinners. Eccles. iii.
11. viii. 17.
xi. 5.
Luke ix. 55.

That this life is not a time of reaping, but of sowing; not of approbation, but of trial; not of triumph, but of combat: this world is not a place of enjoyment, but of work; our condition here is not a state of settlement, but of travel; whence no man should expect more of encouragement, than is needful to support him in this work and way; should look to receive wages before his task is done; to get the prize, before he hath gone through the race; to

^s Διὰ τοῦτο οὔπω κρίσις, ἵνα κοινῇ πάντες στεφανωθῶμεν, ἵνα ἀπὸ πονηρίας πολλοὶ μεταβληθῶμεν εἰς ἀρετήν. Chrys. in Matt. Or. 11.

SERM. gather the spoils, before he hath fought out the bat-
XXXII. tle; to enjoy rest, before he is at his journey's end;
 to be put in full possession of happiness, before his
 right and title thereto is completely assured: that
 no man also should presume or please himself upon
 present impunity for his misbehaviour or sloth, like
 those of whom the Preacher saith, *Because sentence*
against an evil work is not executed speedily,
therefore the heart of the sons of men is fully set
in them to do evil; seeing this is the season of mercy
 and patience, when God commonly doth not further
 inflict crosses on us, than may serve to mind us of
 our duty, or urge us to the performance of it; and
 seeing the longer vengeance is withheld, the more
 heavy it will at last fall on us, if we despise the
 present season of grace, and proceed to the end in
 impenitence; that present impunity, therefore, is a
 sore punishment, and correction here a really great
 favour.

That ordinarily temporal prosperity and adversity,
 as in comparison to things relating to our future
 state they are plainly inconsiderable, so they can be
 no arguments of God's special favour or displeasure;
 whence it appeareth to be no small rashness to con-
 clude how God stands affected to any person from
 what befaller him here, (as those who inferred con-
 cerning the Galileans, *whose blood Pilate mixed*
with their sacrifices; and concerning those Jews,
upon whom the tower in Siloam did fall, that they
 were more sinners than others of their nation,) yea,
 that if we must be interpreting God's mind from
 these occurrences, it is rather more reasonable to
 conceive that God disliketh them whom he doth not
 check, and approveth them whom he chastiseth;

Eccles. viii.
11.

Luke xiii.
1, &c.

Prov. iii. 12.
Job v. 17.

whence the prosperity of bad men is rather pitiable than invidious, as that which aggravateth and strengtheneth their wickedness, which accumulateth guilt, which draweth them forward, and plungeth them deeper into perdition; that the adversity of good men is no misery, but a blessing and happiness to them, as exercising and fortifying their virtues, ensuring their state, endearing them to God. However,

SERM.
XXXII.

Heb. xii. 7.
Rev. iii. 19.
Prov. xxiii.
17.
Luke xvi.

25.

That God plainly doth mean to vilify these present things, appearing to our sense good or evil, by scattering them abroad with an indifferent hand; so that his friends taste as little good and as much evil as his enemies^t.

^uThat there is no reason to wonder or to complain that things here do not go on in a course so smooth and straight as they should do; for that vanity and iniquity have their part and time to act upon this stage, yea are allowed sometimes a seeming reign; but justice, though at present it seemeth to sleep, or to wink at things, will at length awake, and effectually bestir itself; that right, although here it may be sometime crossed or foiled, yet it can never be quelled or overthrown; it may be suspended, but cannot be suppressed; it may be somewhat eclipsed, but it cannot be quite extinguished, yea infallibly in the end it will triumphantly prevail.

That no good design shall be undertaken, nor any honest labour can be spent in vain; seeing although they chance to find no success, or to yield no fruit

^t Nullo modo potest Deus magis concupita traducere, quam si illa in turpissimos defert, ab optimis abigit. *Sen. de Prov.* 5.

^u Dantur bonis ne putentur mala, dantur malis ne putentur summa bona. *Aug.*

SERM. here, yet they cannot fail to obtain a happy issue
 XXXII. and a plentiful reward hereafter.

That how small soever the difference doth now appear between wise men and fools, or between virtuous and vicious persons, there will be hereafter a vast discrimination made, when in consequence of that upright trial one shall enter into eternal bliss, the other shall fall into an abyss of misery.

That this life is not contemptible, nor all things here utterly vain; seeing that upon this life is founded our eternal state; seeing these occurrences have influence upon our eternal joy or woe; seeing all things here will conduce to the illustration of divine mercy or justice. That God is indeed here
 Isa. xlv. 15. *Deus absconditus*, as the prophet styleth him, a *God that hideth himself*; advisedly suffering his goodness and justice to be under a cloud, that at length they may break out more gloriously *in that day, when*, as St. Paul saith, his δικαιοκρισία, his most
 Rom. ii. 5. *righteous dealing* (both in governance of all affairs now, and in deciding of all cases then) *shall be revealed*, and made conspicuous to all the world.

Thus doth it, upon many accounts, appear fit and needful, that there should be a future judgment; the apprehension thereof being the sharpest spur to virtue, the strongest curb from vice, the surest fence of human society, the safest bulwark of religion, (securing the authority of God, and guarding his providence, together with all his holy attributes, from all batteries, all sinister aspersions, all profane misconstructions;) in short, the most effectual means, if it be heartily embraced, to render men, in their minds and in their enjoyments, sober, just in their dealings toward their neighbour, and in all their life

pious toward God ; there being indeed no considera- SER M.
tion, whereof the mind of man is capable, more apt XXXII.
to beget in him a care and conscience of what he
doeth, than this ; that after a very short and trans-
itory life all his actions must undergo a strict scru-
tiny, according to the result whereof he shall be
either approved and rewarded, or condemned and
punished : whereof any man being thoroughly per-
suaded, and anywise considering it, he cannot surely
but accuse himself of extreme folly and madness, if
he doth not provide for that account, and order all
his practice with a regard thereto. The which use
of this point God by his grace dispose us to make,
for the sake of Jesus, our blessed Redeemer, to
whom for ever be all glory and praise.

*Now the very God of peace sanctify you wholly ; 1Thes.v.23.
and I pray God your whole spirit and soul and
body be preserved blameless unto the coming of
our Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.*

From thence he shall come to judge the Quick
and the Dead.

S E R M O N XXXIII.

THE CERTAINTY AND CIRCUMSTANCES OF
A FUTURE JUDGMENT FROM DIVINE
REVELATION.

ACTS x. 42.

And he commanded us to preach unto the people, and to testify that it is he which was ordained by God to be Judge of quick and dead.

SERM. XXXIII. **T**HESE words are part of a sermon preached by St. Peter to Cornelius and his friends, wherein the apostle briefly declareth unto them the chief particulars in the history of Christ, together with some main points of Christian doctrine most fit for them to know ; particularly he doth in these words express the point concerning the *future judgment* ; reporting that our Lord especially did charge his apostles *to preach unto the people and testify*, that is, first publicly to declare and explain, then by convenient proofs, especially by divine attestations, to evince and persuade this point ; the importance whereof, and eminence among other Christian doctrines, doth hence plainly appear, that the author of

our faith did make so especial provision, and gave SERM.
so express charge concerning the promulgation and XXXIII.
probation thereof: the which circumstance is indeed
remarkable and weighty; but I shall not insist on it,
meaning immediately to set upon considering the
point itself, as it is here laid down in these terms;
that it is he which was ordained by God to be
Judge of quick and dead: in which words are
couched three particulars most considerable.

1. A judgment ordained by God, and to be declared to men.

2. The Judge, by whom immediately that judgment is administered; *he*; Jesus, our Lord and Saviour.

3. The extent of that judgment, or its adequate object; *quick and dead*.

These particulars I shall in order touch, inserting some material considerations about the nature and manner of this judgment, with some reasons why it should be thus managed; then I shall adjoin some practical applications.

I. There is a judgment ordained by God, and to be declared to men; that is, concerning the persons and actions of men performed in this life. How just and fit it is that there should be such a judgment, how useful and requisite the declaration thereof is upon several accounts, (for engaging men upon the practice of virtue and restraining them from vice, for the preservation and maintenance of human society, for the support and defence of religion, for the vindication of Divine Providence, and illustration of all God's holy attributes,) I have already endeavoured to declare; and in that regard I shall content myself now to say, that as upon the apparent equity

SERM. and usefulness of this doctrine all nations commonly
 XXXIII. have ever embraced the general substance thereof, as
 Just. M. p. a fundamental principle of their religion, (all men
 I. et p. 106. commonly with a ready inclination having avowed it
 reasonable to suppose that every man after this life
 shall be brought unto a just and impartial bar, where
 his doings shall be exactly scanned, and his person
 answerably doomed unto a comfortable or afflictive
 recompense,) so our religion, in a peculiar manner,
 doth most expressly assert, most clearly describe, and
 most vigorously inculcate it, with all possible advan-
 tage, both for the clearing God's dealings and attri-
 butes, and for the excitement of men to a virtuous
 and pious life. The nature, manner, process, and
 result of the future judgment are in the holy scrip-
 ture most punctually set down.

1. It teacheth us, that God hath appointed a de-
 terminate time for this judgment. *God, saith St.*
 Acts xvii. *Paul, hath appointed a day, in which he will judge*
 31. ii. 20. *the world in righteousness; that which is called*
 Jude 6. *the day of judgment, the last day, the day of the*
Lord, the great and the illustrious day; and, by
 2 Tim. i. *signal excellency, the day; and, that day; inti-*
 18. iv. 8. *minating, beside the certainty of the thing itself, the*
 1 Thes. v. 4. *most especial regard that men are concerned to bear*
 Heb. x. 25. *thereto.*

2. That in order to this judgment all the actions
 of men are with greater exactness registered in
 books; (the books of divine omniscience, seeing all
 things present, and retaining all things past, which
 nothing can escape;) *The books* (it is said in the
 Revelation) *were opened, and the dead were judged*
from the things written in the books, according to
their works.

(Job xiii.
 27. xiv.
 17.)
 Rev. xx.
 12.
 Dan. vii.
 10.)

3. That, in order thereto, there shall be (effected SERM. XXXIII. by divine power and command) a general resurrec-
tion of all persons, both *just and unjust*: *The hour*, Acts xxiv.
saith our Lord, is coming, in which all that are in ^{15.}John v. 28.
the graves shall hear his voice, and shall come
forth; *they that have done good, to the resurrec-*
tion of life; *and they that have done evil, unto the*
resurrection of damnation.

4. That then all persons so raised shall be pre-
sented at the bar of our Lord, to answer and un-
dergo their trial; *I saw*, saith St. John, *the great* Rev. xx. 12.
and small standing before God's throne; and, *We* Rom. xiv.
must all, saith St. Paul, *be made appear, and be* 10.
set forth at the judgment-seat of Christ; and, *The* Φανερω-
θῆναι.
2 Cor. v.
10.
Son of man, saith our Lord, *shall sit upon the* Παρίστα-
σθαι.
Matt. xxv.
31, 32.
throne of his glory, and all nations shall be ga-
thered together before him.

5. That then and there every thought, every
word, every work of men shall be thoroughly disclosed
and discussed; so that it, together with its due qua-
lity and desert, shall plainly appear; all the designs
and pretences of men shall be laid bare; every case
shall be considered; every plea heard and scanned;
the merits of every cause weighed in an even ba-
lance, according to truth and equity; men's neglects
and omissions of duty shall also come under consi-
deration; an account will be exacted of all the ta-
lents entrusted to any man, (of the abilities, oppor-
tunities, and advantages he ever had of doing God
service,) and of what improvements answerable he
hath made; what men have done themselves, and
what they have done by others, from the influence
of their advice, their persuasion, or their example,
shall be searched out and poised; *God*, saith St. 1 Cor. iv. 5.

SERM. XXXIII. Paul, *will bring to light the hidden things of darkness, and will make manifest the counsels of hearts;*
 Rom. ii. 29. and, *Of every idle word that men shall speak, they*
 1 Pet. 4, 5. *shall render an account at the day of judgment,*
 Matt. xii. 36. *saith our Lord; and, After a long time, saith he*
 Matt. xxv. 18. *again, the Lord of those servants cometh, and*
 Eccles. xii. 4. *reckoneth with them, &c. and, Every work, saith the Preacher, God shall bring into judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good, or whether it be evil.*

6. That upon each man, according to the true quality of his doings, thus detected, examined, and stated, a definitive sentence shall pass, whereby he shall be acquitted and approved, or condemned and reprobated; τότε ὁ ἕκαστος γενήσεται ἐκάστῳ, *Then, saith St. Paul, praise shall be to each one; praise*, that is, generally, (by an εὐφημισμὸς, or favourable manner of speech,) a due taxation and esteem, according to merit: then, *Well done, good and faithful servant,* and, *O thou bad and slothful servant*, shall be pronounced to one or the other sort of men, respectively, according to their demeanour here.

Μεθ' αὐτοῦ
 Heb. xi. 26. 7. That according to the purport of this sentence a discrimination shall be made; and to one party a gracious reward, correspondent to the quality and measure of their good works, in a blissful place; to the other, a sore punishment, in proportion to their demerits, in a place of misery: to the one, everlasting joy and glory above in heaven; to the other, endless sorrow and shame beneath in hell, shall be assigned and dispensed effectually. *The Son of man shall come in the glory of his Father with his angels; and then he shall reward every man according to his works; he will separate them one from*

Matt. xvi.
27.

Matt. xxv.
32, &c.

another, as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats; and he shall set his sheep on his right hand, but the goats on the left: then the King shall say unto them on his right hand, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world:— and, Then he shall say also unto them on the left hand, Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the Devil and his angels: and, the good and faithful servant shall enter into his Master's joy; the bad and slothful shall be cast into utter darkness, where is weeping and gnashing of teeth: so our Lord himself expresseth it: and St. Paul thus; *We must, saith he, all appear before the tribunal of God, ἵνα κομίσῃται ἕκαστος, that each one may bear away the things done in the body, according to what he hath done, whether it be good or bad: and, God will render unto every man according to his works: to them who by patient continuance in well-doing seek for glory and honour and immortality, eternal life: but unto them that are contentious, and obey not the truth, but obey unrighteousness, indignation and wrath, tribulation and anguish, upon every soul of man that doeth evil: and even of old the prophet Daniel thus briefly did express this different doom; Many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake; some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt.* Hence in regard to one party is the time of judgment styled *the season of refreshment, the day of redemption, the time of recompense;* in reference to the other, *the day of wrath, the day of destruction, the time of vengeance;* when our Lord will, as St. Paul saith, *take vengeance on them*

SERM.
XXXIII.

Matt. xxv.
21, 30.

2 Cor. v. 10.

Rom. ii.
6—9.

Dan. xii. 2.

Acts iii. 19.
Eph. iv. 30.
Luke xiv.

12.
Col. iii. 24.
Rom. ii. 5.
2 Pet. iii. 7.
2 Thes. i. 8.

SERM. *that know not God, and obey not the Gospel of our*
 XXXIII. *Lord Jesus Christ; who shall be punished with*
everlasting destruction from the presence of the
Lord, and from the glory of his power.

8. We are also further taught, that all this shall
 be transacted in a regular, public, and most solemn
 manner, in open court, in the face and audience of
 all the world, before angels and men. For our Lord
 is described coming to judgment with attendance
 of all the holy angels; and the saints, being them-
 selves first approved, shall become assessors there;
 and all men are represented as present at the trial,
 or as spectators and auditors thereof: *Whosoever,*
saith our Lord, shall confess me before men, him
shall the Son of man also confess before the angels
of God; but he that denieth me before men shall
be denied before the angels of God: and, There
is nothing covered that shall not be revealed; nei-
ther hid, that shall not be known: whatsoever ye
have spoken in darkness shall be heard in the
light; and that which ye have spoken in closets
shall be proclaimed upon the housetops.

9. That also the judgment shall pass to the full
 conviction and entire satisfaction of all that are
 present; so that each one concerned therein shall
 be forced in conscience to acquiesce in his doom,
 as most just and equal; the condemned stooping
 with awe to his justice; the absolved adoring with
 humble reverence his mercy; the spectators applaud-
 ing with admiration his holy wisdom: for that day
 will be, as St. Paul calleth it, *a day of revelation of*
God's righteous judgment; and God in regard
 thereto is represented speaking thus; *To me, as I*
live, saith the Lord, every knee shall bow, and

every tongue shall give glory to God: and, our SERM.
Lord, in that day, saith St. Paul, will be glorified XXXIII.
in his saints, and admired in all them that believe: 2 Thess. i.
and, *He will then, as it is in St. Jude, convince all* ^{10.} Jude 15.
that are ungodly of all their ungodly deeds, which
they have ungodlily committed, and of all the hard
speeches which ungodly sinners have spoken against
him. So that thereupon those confessions and ac-
clamations of praise in the Revelation shall be re-
sounded through heaven; *Alleluia; Salvation, and* Rev. xix. 2.
glory, and power, be to the Lord our God; for xvi. 7. vii.
true and righteous are his judgments: Salvation 10. xv. 3.
be unto our Lord, that sitteth on the throne, and
to the Lamb: Great and wonderful are thy works,
O Lord God Almighty; just and true are thy
ways, O thou King of saints.

Thus do the holy Pandects of our religion set out that judgment, which all men hereafter must undergo; wherein all the attributes of God shall be conspicuously glorified; his wonderful clemency shall be sweetly displayed, his exact justice shall be terribly demonstrated, his perfect wisdom shall be clearly unfolded; wherein the knotty intrigues of Providence shall be loosed, and the mysterious depths of the divine counsels shall be laid open; and God's honour, which now by the bold and rash judgments of men is often attacked, shall be thoroughly cleared and repaired, to the joyful satisfaction of all pious men, and sad confusion of the impious; wherein the great wisdom of those, who before all things choose to be good and to serve God, and the extreme folly of those who scorn or neglect piety, shall be most evidently apparent; wherein, finally, all scores that now so undiscernibly run on shall be exactly

SERM. XXXIII. quitted and even; impartial right shall be done; every man shall have his due assigned and rendered to him.

But let so much suffice concerning the judgment appointed: we proceed to the next particular, the Judge ordained; *he*; that is, Jesus, our Lord and Saviour.

II. The original right and absolute power of judging doth inseparably pertain to God Almighty, whose creatures, whose servants, whose subjects we are, and consequently to whose judgment we stand obnoxious; as he is naturally the Sovereign Lord and King of the world, so he is, as the apostle calleth him, *κριτὴς πάντων*, the *Judge of all* persons and things; and particularly *Judge of all the earth*, or of all men, as Abraham did style him; as upon the grounds specified we do owe obedience to the laws he prescribeth us, performance of the service he alloteth us, and improvement of the talents he committeth to us; so we do thence stand obliged to render an account to him of our correspondent behaviour, and due management in those respects, and are liable to the judgment he shall make thereof: all judgment therefore must be exercised either immediately by God himself, or in subordination to him; in his name and right, and by virtue of authority derived from him; otherwise that of St. Paul, *Who art thou that judgest another's servant*, might be alleged against any, who, without license or commission from him, should presume to judge us.

Now that immediately God should administer any judgment, is incongruous to his nature and to ours; it is particularly unsuitable to the manner of this judgment, which God designeth to be such as may pass

openly before all the world, to the conspicuous de- SERM.
 claration of his glorious justice and mercy, to the XXXIII.
 clear satisfaction and conviction of all persons in-
 terested therein : which, that it might be, *it was*
fit, as St. Austin saith, *that they who were to be*
judged should see their judge ; ^a it is fit, that the
 assistants and spectators, or witnesses thereof, should
 discern the process : but the glorious and dreadful
 presence of God cannot be discernible by us, or would
 not be supportable ; *He*, saith St. Paul, *inhabiteth* 1 Tim. vi.
inaccessible light, so that no man hath seen, or can ^{16.}
see him : and, *Thou canst not see my face*, saith he
 to Moses ; *for there shall no man see me, and live* : Exod.
^{xxxiii. 20.}
^{Isa. vi. 2.}
 that majesty, before which the purest seraphims,
 being dazzled with its infinite brightness, are con-
 strained to veil their faces ; that presence, of which
 the prophet saith, *The mountains quake at him*, Nah. i. 5.
and the hills melt, and the earth is burnt in his (Ps. civ. 32.
^{xviii. 18.})
presence ; yea, the world, and all that dwell there-
in ; how should frail and impure flesh sustain ? how
 should guilty sinners appear before him ? *Who may* Ps. lxxvi. 7.
stand in his sight when he is angry ? when he is ^{cxix. 3.}
^{cxliii. 2.}
^{Jer. x. 10.}
angry, at whose wrath the earth shall tremble, and
the nations shall not be able to abide his indigna-
tion : What ear of mortal man could endure that
voice, at which the earth melteth ; that reproof, at Ps. xlv. 6.
which the pillars of heaven are astonished ? It ^{Job xxvi.}
^{11.}
 being therefore from the divine excellency impossi-
 ble or inconvenient, that God himself, immediately
 as such, should exercise judgment ; it hath pleased
 him, in his stead, to constitute one most fit for that

^a Etenim ea quæ judicantur, oportebat videre judicem et scire
 hunc a quo judicantur, &c. *Iren.* iii. 9.

Rectum erat, ut judicandi viderent judicem. *Aug.*

SERM. employment: as he for particular temporal judg-
 XXXIII. ments here hath appointed princes and governors
 visibly to manage them as his ministers and vicege-
 rents in his name and behalf; so that universal and
 ultimate judgment he hath (for his own greater
 glory and our special benefit) committed unto his
 beloved Son Jesus, our blessed Mediator and Sa-
 viour; the same who, with most admirable conde-
 scension of grace and charity, did once come hither
 in our nature to rescue us from sin and misery; who
 underwent so many crosses and troubles for us; who
 freely laid down his life to redeem and save us; he
 (1 Cor. xv. 27.) it is, who is ὁρισμένος ὑπὸ τοῦ Θεοῦ κριτῆς, *decreed* and
 determined *by God* (or under him, as his substitute
 and deputy) *to be our judge*: so in our text; and
 Acts xvii. 31. so again St. Paul; *God hath appointed a day, in
 which he will judge the world in righteousness, ἐν
 ἀνδρὶ ᾧ ὥρισεν, by the man, or in the man, whom he
 hath ordained*; whence it is called *the judgment-*
 Rom. xiv. 10. *seat of Christ, before which we must appear*: and,
 2 Cor. v. 10. *The Father*, saith our Lord himself, *judgeth no*
 1 Cor. iv. 4. *man*, (that is, immediately and separately,) *but hath*
 John v. 22, 27. *given all judgment to the Son*: and, *The Father,*
 2 Tim. iv. 1. *he addeth, hath given to the Son the authority, and
 to execute judgment, because he is the Son of man*;
 that is, God hath conferred on him the sovereign re-
 gal authority, and hath particularly committed to
 him that prime branch thereof, judicial power; *even
 as he is the Son of man*: so that as in our nature
 he performed all that was requisite to save us, as
 in our nature he was exalted to God's right hand
 to rule and bless us; ^bso for consummation of all

^b Illa forma videbitur Filii, quam sibi per sacramentum incar-
 nationis univit, &c. *Prosp. Sent.* 337.

done in our regard, he shall in our nature appear to judge us ; awarding to us the rewards he purchased for us, or punishments for the contempt of his favours. SERM.
XXXIII.

And, indeed, that he under this name and notion was designed to this office, even the ancient prophets did foreshew : for it was *one like the Son of man*, Dan. vii. whom *Daniel did behold coming with the clouds* ^{13, 14.} *of heaven*, having all royal dominion and power given unto him ; and it was, according to Isaiah's predictions, the *Son, born and given unto us, upon whose shoulder the government should be*, and to Isa. vii. 14.
ix. 6, 7. xi.
3. xlii. 1, 3. whom the kingdom should be assigned, *to order it, and establish it, with judgment and justice for ever.*

The point then is manifest, that our Saviour Jesus, by designment and deputation from God, is invested with this eminent office and power. And why it should be so, many reasons, many fair congruities, may be assigned.

1. It was requisite (as we before touched) that the judge should be visible, and audible ; such whom the parties concerned might (without extreme surprise and amazement) discern and converse with, in order to their clearer and fuller satisfaction, or conviction : such our Lord, the Son of man, clothed with glorified flesh, will be ; his mild and sweet, though bright and stately aspect, all men in some manner may be capable of seeing ; his calm and clear voice all men may hear : him the just may with cheerful satisfaction behold smiling on them with gracious kindness ; and the wicked also with sad confusion may view frowning toward them with just disdain ; those with comfortable joy may hear

SERM. him acquitting, commending, and blessing them;
 XXXIII. these with due regret also may hear him convincing, reproof, and denouncing the fatal curse on them: so that hereupon the former, with humble thankfulness, shall willingly acknowledge and praise his grace; the latter, with shameful horror, constrainedly shall confess their guilt before him; *Behold*, saith St. John, with an emphatical regard it seems to this consideration, *he cometh in the clouds; and every eye shall see him, even they who pierced him*: and, *They*, saith our Lord himself, *shall see the Son of man coming upon the clouds of heaven, in power and great glory*: and our Lord is represented in judgment speaking and arguing the case with all parties concerned, receiving their plea, and expressing his mind to them: this is a kind of natural capacity qualifying him for this employment; but there are considerations of a higher nature peculiarly fitting him for it.

2. It was indeed a good part of that regal office, which God, in reward of his obedience, and to declare his acceptance thereof, did confer upon him; giving him *a power over all flesh, all authority in heaven and earth*; whence it is by St. Paul called *his kingdom*; *I charge thee*, saith he to Timothy, *before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the quick and the dead at his appearing and his kingdom*: he being then our King, and as such the fountain of all justice, must either himself in person, or by some delegate, administer it; but that he should immediately do it, divers special reasons do suggest themselves.

3. It is an office of too great eminence and dignity to be imparted to any other: he alone who subsists

in union with God, who is the Son of God, who hath SERM. XXXIII.
 most highly pleased God, who hath merited a so-
 vereignty over us, and a supreme eminency above all
 creatures, is capable of the honour to determine those
 points of the highest importance concerning the final
 doom of God's creatures, and the salvation of those
 souls whom he hath purchased; *Worthy is he alone* Rev. v. 9,
to receive the book, (of judgment,) *and to open the* 12.
seals thereof; because he was slain, and hath re-
deemed us to God by his blood: Worthy is the
Lamb (worthy exclusively, and solely) *that was*
slain to receive the power and honour, the glory
and blessing, annexed to this high office.

As there is nothing more apt to beget in us vene-
 ration toward him, than considering that he shall be
 our judge, upon whose sentence our fate and felicity
 must depend; so it is therefore most fit, that it
 incommunicably and solely should belong to him;
 especially seeing God with especial regard to his ho-
 nour did assign the judicial office to him: the *Fa-* John v. 22,
ther, it is said, *hath committed all judgment to the* 23.
Son; that all men might honour the Son, as they
do the Father.

4. He alone also hath capacities proper for this Διὰ τοῦτο γὰρ καὶ μό-
 νος κρίτης,
 ὅτι ἀναμάρ-
 τος μόνος.
 judicature: he only hath that divine faculty of
 searching men's hearts; he only is furnished with
 wisdom to know all matters of fact that ever Clem. Al.
 Pæd. l. 2.
 were, and to discern the right in every case; he
 above all, being absolutely good, is endued with per-
 fect equity of mind, and immutable love of right,
 always disposing him to judge most justly; he alone
 can have in him that *μετριοπάθεια*, or exact tempera- Heb. v. 2.
 ment of affection toward men, which is requisite to
 the distribution of equal justice toward them, accord-

SERM. ing to due measures of mercy and severity; the
 XXXIII. highest angel in heaven were incapable so rightly
 to distinguish the strict bounds of these things.
 Wherefore in regard to these dispositions peculiar to
 him, we are even by the ancient prophets informed,
 Isa. xi. 2, that this office is allotted to him; *The spirit of the*
 3, 4. *Lord, saith Isaiah, shall rest upon him, the spirit*
of wisdom—and shall make him of quick under-
standing in the fear of the Lord: and he shall
not judge after the sight of his eyes, nor reprove
after the hearing of his ears: but with righteous-
 Isa. xliii. 3. *ness shall he judge the poor, and reprove with*
equity for the meek of the earth: and, A bruised
reed (saith God in the same prophet, intimating his
incomparable sagacity, equity, and temper, as it were,
for this purpose) shall he not break, and the smok-
 Psal. xlv. 7. *ing flax shall he not quench: he shall bring forth*
judgment unto truth: and, Thou, saith the Psalm-
ist concerning him, lovest righteousness, and hatest
iniquity: therefore God, even thy God, hath an-
ointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy fel-
lows.

5. By this designation the glory of God is especially promoted, his most excellent attributes being much illustrated thereby: his wisdom appeareth in constituting one so in all respects most fit to discharge the office, and his goodness most clearly shines therein: for since it was requisite that a judgment should pass upon us, how could the terror thereof be better allayed, than by putting it into the hands of his Son? to whose cognizance, were the choice permitted to us, should we rather submit our actions, than to his? to whom rather should we freely commit all our life and welfare, than to him,

who by nature is so nearly allied to us, and hath not SERM.
disdained to call us *brethren*? who in disposition of XXXIII.
spirit is so *meek and lowly*, so *merciful* and *com-* Matt. xi. 29.
passionate? who here was visibly in disposition and Heb. ii. 17.
demeanour a lamb, and is represented to us continu- iv. 15.
ing such; than to him, who by so many signal ex-
periments hath expressed an excess of kindness to-
wards us, and tenderness of our welfare; who hath
conspicuously evidenced himself to be the best friend
to mankind; that he ardently desireth the salvation
of all men, even of his worst enemies; for whom he
willingly did spend his blood, for whom he dying
earnestly prayed; whom he continually wooeth to
reconciliation and repentance, and consequently to
the enjoyment of greatest happiness? How then
could God more plainly express his goodness toward
us, than in assigning such a judge for us.

How also could he exhibit a more illustrious in-
stance of his justice, and love to righteousness, than
in advancing him to so glorious an office, who out of
perfect compliance to his will did freely stoop so low,
and gladly undergo so much? Worthy of God it was,
and a congruous retribution, to place the crown on Rev. v. 12.
his head, to put the sceptre into his hand, who will-
ingly bore a cross, who patiently submitted to a
scourge; to constitute him the Judge, who, out of
abundant piety to God and charity to God's creature,
was contented to be arraigned, to be sentenced, to be
executed as a malefactor: he dearly purchased the
right to be *Lord of dead and living*, and just it was Rom. xiv. 9.
that in effect he should obtain it.

6. Just it likewise was, that to him, immediately
and solemnly, should be consigned a power to ac-
knowledge and reward his faithful friends and ser-

SERM. wants ; those who had believed his word, had observ-
XXXIII. ed his laws, had out of love and respect done much
 and suffered much for him.

Just also it was, that he should be empowered to do himself right upon his proud and spiteful enemies ; that he should see them lying under his feet, and at his disposal, who had so scornfully insulted on him, and so cruelly misused him ; that he righteously should judge them, who so maliciously had accused and so injuriously condemned him ; should chastise them severely, who most unmercifully had afflicted and slaughtered him ; should worthily reprobate all those, who had unworthily rejected him : in fine, that he should render a due recompense to all wicked persons, who by distrusting his word, by despising his overtures of grace and mercy, by resisting his will and rejecting his authority, by trampling upon his holy doctrine and laws, had wronged, had dishonoured, had disclaimed him.

7. This appointment of Jesus for our Judge is further very conducive to our edification, in way of excitement to the practice of our duty, and encouragement thereto ; in way of consolation and satisfaction to our soul.

It considered is apt to raise in us a high reverence and dread of our Saviour ; and consequently to dispose us to the observance of his laws, and imitation of his example.

It is matter of special comfort and encouragement to consider, that hence assuredly we shall find a fair and favourable trial ; since it is no enemy, not one disaffected, yea, not one indifferently affected toward us, who shall judge us, but our best friend ;

from whom we may expect not only justice and equity, but all the favour and kindness our cause will bear. SERM.
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It also duly pondered is most proper to work in us an earnest care, and fear of sinning, and thereby of becoming obnoxious to condemnation: for what an aggravation will it yield to our whether foolish perverseness or slothful negligence; how extreme dissingenuity, how wretched ingratitude will it argue in us, to be cast and condemned by such a judge; a judge so fair and equal, so mild and gentle, so benign and favourable to us; so willing to acquit us, so desirous to save us! With what face, think we, having transgressed his most good and righteous laws, having rejected all his gracious tenders of mercy and favour, having defeated all his most serious purposes, and frustrated his most painful endeavours for our welfare; having violated our manifold obligations and engagements to him; having abused his so unexpressible great love and good-will toward us; having hence deplorably forfeited all his favour, and incurred his most grievous displeasure; with what face, I say, having done all this, shall we appear in his presence? how then shall we bear the frowns of his tender love changed into fierce disdain, of highest patience turned into extreme fury, of so terrible a majesty provoked by so heinous affronts? with what heart shall we hear that once most sweet and charming voice, which in so pleasant and affectionate a strain did sound forth words of peace and comfort in our ears; that so kindly invited us to reconciliation, ^{2 Cor. v. 20.} so meekly sued us to a compliance with him, so liberally offered to us the best things in the world upon so gentle terms, now only uttering toward us

SERM. bitter complaints and sore rebukes; thundering forth
 XXXIII. words of indignation and terror, denouncing most
 horrible menaces and curses upon us.

Thus, and to such purposes, is Jesus our Lord appointed to be our Judge: I shall only further touch the manner of his exercising and executing this office, or the way of his address and proceeding thereto; the which in holy scripture (for the begetting in us a regard, veneration, and awe suitable thereto) is described to be with greatest glory, state, and solemnity. Our Lord came once in a meek humility to shew us our duty, but he shall come again with a
 μυστήριον.
 Heb. xii. 22. dreadful majesty to exact an account thereof; taking his progress from the highest heavens in most royal magnificent equipage, attended upon with a numerous, or with a numberless, and most pompous train of angels, (*with all the holy angels*, it is expressly said,) accompanied with triumphal shouts and acclamations; *a trumpet of God*, (that is, a wonderfully and unconceivably sonorous trumpet, blown, as it were, by the mouth of God,) and *the voice of an archangel* resounding before him an universal summons, with a noise so loud and piercing, as shall immediately, *in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye*, shake all the earth, and rouse all the dead out of their mortal slumber; the irresistible breath of that all-powerful voice wafting them, together with all
 1 Cor. xv. 52. surviving people, through the clouds into the presence of their Judge, conspicuously seated in most glorious state upon his royal tribunal.

1 Thess. iv. 17.
 Matt. xxv. 31.
 Acts i. 11. *This same Jesus*, said the two angels to the apostles, expressing this matter in the most simple and plain manner, *shall come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven: a cloud took him up from*

their eyes then, and the clouds, as they imply, SERM. XXXIII.
 should restore him to their sight; for, *Behold*, saith Rev. i. 7.
 St. John, *he cometh with the clouds; and every eye* Matt. xxiv.
shall see him: and, *They shall see the Son of man* 30. xvi. 64.
coming upon the clouds of heaven in power and Matt. xxv.
great glory; and, *When the Son of man shall come* 31. xvi. 27.
in his glory, and all the holy angels with him, then 2 Thess. i. 17.
shall he sit upon the throne of his glory, saith our
 Lord himself somewhat more explicitly: but St.
 Paul with most punctuality describeth the manner
 of his appearance; *The Lord*, saith he, *shall de-* 1 Thess. iv 16.
scend from heaven with a shout, (*ἐν κελεύσματι*, with 1 Cor. xv. 52.
 an exciting or commanding summons,) *with the*
voice of an archangel, and with the trump of God;
and the dead in Christ shall rise first: then we,
which are alive and remain, shall be caught up to-
gether with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord
in the air; and so shall we ever be with the Lord.
 In such manner, to the purpose of exciting due
 respect and dread within us, is our Lord represented
 at the end of the world to come down from heaven,
 for the exercising this judgment.

III. I proceed to the last particular observed in
 the text, which is the objects, or the extent of the
 judgment ordained: whom is our Lord ordained to
 judge? how many shall they be? It is resolved;
 all, without exception; expressed here by the words
quick and dead: and elsewhere by St. Paul; *I* 2 Tim. iv. 1.
charge thee, saith he to Timothy, *before God and* Rom. xiv. 9.
the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the quick
and dead at his appearing and his kingdom: and
 by St. Peter likewise; *Who*, saith he, concerning 1 Pet. iv. 5.
 profane men, *shall render an account to him that*
is ready to judge both the quick and dead: which

SERM. places evidently do confirm the truth of the proposi-
 XXXIII. tion, that all men are obnoxious and shall be sub-
 jected to this judgment; but yet so that the words
 themselves, *quick and dead*, may seem to need some
 explication; for it being a common law, to which
 all men by nature, such as it now stands, after the
 Heb. ix. 27. curse, are subject to undergo death; for thence *it is*,
 ἀνάστασις.
 Isa. lxxxix. as the apostle saith, *appointed for men once to die*,
 48. *and after death judgment*; and, *What man is he*,
 saith the Psalmist, *that shall not see death*? and
 that being so, why should not the dead comprehend
 all that are to be judged? accordingly as we see it
 Rev. xx. 12. expressed in the Revelation; *I saw the dead, great*
and small, standing before God—and the dead
were judged for the things written in the books,
according to their works. The dead were judged;
 no mention is made of the living: wherefore, to
 evade this objection, some have interpreted the dead
 and living, not for a distinction of persons, but of
 parts in men; of the living souls and dead bodies of
 men: others have taken the words as signifying
 metaphorically *the living*, that is, righteous men,
 say they, or persons endued with a spiritual life;
 Eph. ii. 1. and *the dead*, that is, persons *dead in trespasses*
and sins, or void of spiritual sense and activity.
 But the difficulty is not so mighty as to force us
 upon so remote and absonous interpretations, St.
 Paul having plainly enough shewed us how to un-
 derstand his words, and how to solve the knot pro-
 pounded; that by the living are to be understood
 those who shall be found, as it were surprised, alive
 at our Lord's coming; by the dead, all other persons,
 who, from the beginning before that time, had de-
 ceased, and should be raised up at the sound of the

last trump; *This we say to you*, saith he to the Thessalonians, *in the word of the Lord, that we which live, remaining at the presence of the Lord, shall not prevent them which are asleep.* Our Lord is therefore supposed by the apostle to find some alive at his coming; wherefore, that which is affirmed concerning all men being appointed to taste death, (being otherwise, as the instances of Enoch and Elias shew, liable to exception,) is to be understood, by a synecdoche very ordinary in such cases, for the incomparably greater part of men; for all indeed, but one generation; or with this abatement, all but those whose death shall be prevented by our Lord's appearance; (the which is set out as very sudden and unexpected, *like the coming of a thief in the night*;) even those men also being in nature and condition mortal like others, although accidentally thus escaping the actual stroke of death. Neither shall even those persons be so exempted from death, but that they must undergo somewhat equivalent thereto; a change, which shall render them alike prepared for judgment with those who had undergone death; for, *Behold*, saith St. Paul again to the Corinthians, *I tell you a mystery; We shall not all fall asleep, but we shall all be changed, in an instant, in the twinkling of an eye*: which words alone do with sufficient evidence declare the meaning of this distinction between *quick* and *dead*. The sum is, that all persons, none excepted, of what condition or quality, what nation or time, what sex or what age soever, shall be exposed to the judgment; high and low, rich and poor, wise and simple, learned and ignorant, good and bad; the mightiest princes and lords, no less than the meanest subjects

SERM.
XXXIII.

1 Thess. iv.
15.

1 Cor. xv.

51.

SERM. and slaves ; the subtlest statesmen and deepest scho-
 XXXIII. lars, no less than the silliest idiots : in a word, most
 universally *all* without any distinction, any privilege,
 any acceptance of persons, all and every one must
 certainly appear at this bar, must undergo this trial,
 must here receive their sentence and doom, must
 undergo reward or punishment accordingly.

IV. The doctrinal part I have thus gone through
 of this grand point ; it remaineth to make some ap-
 plication thereof. The considering it is indeed most
 necessary, and exceedingly profitable in many re-
 spects : there is no kind of virtue or good practice,
 which the serious consideration thereof is not apt to
 produce ; no good affection, which it may not serve
 to excite ; no good duty, to which it doth not pow-
 erfully engage us : there is likewise no ill passion,
 which it may not help to quell or repress ; no bad
 design or action, which it may not effectually deter
 or discourage us from. Of so many particular uses
 I shall only touch those which are most obvious ;
 especially those unto which the scripture doth ex-
 pressly apply the consideration thereof.

1. It greatly doth engage us to be very circum-
 spect in all our conversation, and vigilant over our
 ways ; for since by irreversible decree it is appointed,
 that we must render an account of every thought
 arising in our mind, (at least of those which find
 harbour and entertainment there ;) of every word
 that passeth through our mouth ; of every action
 which we do undertake ; what exceeding reason
 have we, with most attentive and accurate regard,
 to mind whatever we do ! since it is certain, that
 for all these things we shall be judged, but uncertain
 to us when we shall be called thereto ; how watchful

Matt. xxv.
 13. xxiv.
 42, 44.

Rev. iii. 3.
 xvi. 15.

are we concerned to be, that we be not surprised, and found unready to yield a good account: how observant in all reason should we be of our Lord's admonition in the Gospel; *Watch, for ye do not know the day, nor the hour, when the Son of man cometh*: how affected should we be with that warning, or menace, in the Revelation; *If thou dost not watch, I shall come upon thee as a thief, and thou shalt not know when I come upon thee*! It may be, as we see intimated, the next day, for all we can know, or the next hour, when death seizing on us shall carry us into that prison or place of durance, where we shall be detained until the time of our being presented at the bar; and what an unexpressible misery then will it be, to be found unprepared for the trial, and unable to render a good account! If we be quite asleep, in a total neglect of our duty; or if we be drowsy, in a careless and sluggish performance thereof; or if our senses rest amused upon other cares and businesses impertinent to this account; in what an extreme danger do we abide! as our Saviour again doth warn, advising thus; *Take heed to yourselves, lest at any time your hearts be overcharged with surfeiting, and drunkenness, and cares of this life, and so that day come upon you unawares.* You know what the fortune was of the foolish virgins, whose *lamps were gone out* for want of oil; that is, whose souls were destitute of true goodness, and whose lives consequently did not shine with good works; how, being surprised in that case by the bridegroom's coming, they were unfit to meet him, they were excluded from his favour, they were rejected with an, *I know you not.* The like fate you know of that bad servant, who, *saying in his*

SERM.
XXXIII.

Luke xxi.
34.
1 Thess. v.

3.

Matt. xxv.
8.

Matt. xxiv.
48.

SERM. XXXIII. *heart, My Lord delayeth to come, (that is, not believing, or not considering his state in relation to the future judgment,) began to beat his fellow-servants, and to eat and drink with the drunken; (that is, did live in the practice of injustice, uncharitableness, and intemperance;) his fate shall be this; The Lord of that servant will come in a day when he looketh not for him, and in an hour that he is not aware of, and shall cut him asunder, and appoint his portion with the hypocrites; the same, if we do live in gross neglect, or in heinous violation of our duty, will be our doom. Let therefore (as our Lord again doth enjoin and inculcate) our loins be girded about, and our lamps burning; and we ourselves like men that wait for their Lord, when he will return from the wedding; that when he com-*

Luke xii. 35, 36. *eth, we may open unto him immediately. Let us, as St. Peter exhorteth, gird up the loins of our mind, be sober, and hope to the end for the grace that (in case of our faithful and constant obedience) shall be brought unto us at the revelation of Jesus Christ.*

1 Pet. i. 13. *In fine, considering these things, what manner of persons then ought we to be in all holy conversation and godliness, looking for and hasting unto the coming of our Lord? as that great apostle doth again admonish and argue.*

2 Pet. iii. 12.

2. The consideration of this point is the most effectual means possible to beget and preserve sincerity in us; disposing us to live simply, without dissimulation or deceit, speaking as we think, doing what we profess, performing what we promise, being as we seem; for, seeing our hearts must be thoroughly searched and sifted; since our most retired thoughts must be disclosed; since our most secret designs and

our desires must come to light, and be exposed to the public view of angels and men; since the day approacheth, when (all vizards being taken off, all varnish of pretence being wiped away) every person shall appear stark naked in his own true shape and colours; every thing shall seem what it really is, divested of false glosses, what profit can it be now to dissemble, to conceal, or to disguise our thoughts or doings? To what purpose doth it serve to palliate our ambitious or covetous intents with specious garbs of zeal or conscience? What comfort can we find in driving on our self-interests, or satisfying our private resentments, in disturbing the peace of mankind, or fomenting stirs and factions in the world under such masks? What a folly is it to delude men with false appearances, or rather by them to abuse themselves; seeing they soon will be rightly informed, and we grievously disgraced for it? What other satisfaction indeed can we have, than in real goodness and pure integrity in heart and life; whereby we may now approve our consciences unto God, and shall afterward by his unquestionable judgment be approved to all the world? our true wisdom is to be εἰλικρινεῖς καὶ ἀπρόσκοποι, as St. Paul speaketh; that is, *simple and inoffensive toward the day of Christ*; that is, without any indirect regard or design, conscionably to perform our duty toward God and man, in order to the rendering a good account at the last judgment; our best comfort will prove that of St. Paul—the testimony of our conscience, that in simplicity and godly sincerity, not with fleshly wisdom, but by the grace of God, we have had our conversation in the world.

SERM.
XXXIII.

Phil. i. 10.

2 Cor. i. 10.

3. The consideration of this point should render us very sober and serious in all our thoughts, our

SERM. opinions, our affections, our actions ; suppressing all
XXXIII. proud and haughty conceits, all admiration of these
transitory things, all vicious excesses, all vain curiosities, all wanton joys and satisfactions : for,

Why should any apprehension of worldly state, of wealth, of honour, of wit, of any natural or acquired endowment, puff up our minds, seeing the day is near at hand, which in these regards will quite level men, and set them all upon even ground before an impartial bar, where no such things shall be had in any consideration or regard ; when all secular and external advantages being laid aside, the moral qualities of men only shall be taxed and estimated^b ; a day wherein all these admired vanities shall vanish into nothing ; all our empty tumours shall be depressed ; all the fond arrogance of man shall be confounded ; so that the proud and profane ones of the world shall be constrained to say after **Wisd. v. 8,** the Wise Man, *What hath pride profited us ? or what good hath riches with our vaunting brought us ? All these things are passed away as a shadow, and as a post that hasted by.*

And why should we much value those splendid toys, or that sordid trash, which men here do so eagerly scrape, and scramble, and scuffle for ; which then evidently will be discountenanced, will at least appear worthless and unprofitable to us ? what indeed in this world, supposing this judgment, being truly rated, can seem great, or worthy to affect us ?

And why, having affairs on foot of so immensely vast importance, should we amuse ourselves with

^b Οὐ πλούσιος, οὐ πένης, οὐ δυνάστης, οὐκ ἀσθενής, οὐ σοφός, οὐκ ἄσοφος, οὐ δοῦλος, οὐκ ἐλεύθερος, οὐδεὶς ἐκεῖ φανεῖται, ἀλλὰ τῶν προσωπείων ταύτων συντριβέντων, ἢ τῶν ἔργων ἐξέτασις ἔσται μόνη. Chrys. in Matt. xvii. 9.

trivial matters, impertinent at least, if not prejudicial to our main accounts? SERM.
XXXIII.

And how shall we dare to embrace the serpent of sinful excess, considering, beside the poison in its body, what a dreadful sting it carrieth in the tail thereof; how these flashes of pleasure do kindle a flame, that will scorch us to eternity? One thought of judgment mixed with any brutish enjoyments were enough, one would think, to allay their sweetness, to render them indeed not only insipid, but distasteful and bitter to us.

And how can we be easily transported into wild merriments, suffering our minds to be ruffled, and the tone of our reason to be slackened by them, if we consider how infinitely serious business lieth upon us; what a dismal hazard we stand in, how nearly our everlasting welfare lieth at stake? If here in this world we were bound in few days to undergo a trial concerning our life, all our estate, and all our reputation, we should deem it seasonable to be somewhat intent, to be indeed very solicitous about what we should plead, and how we should get off; rather than to be lightly sporting at, and loosening our minds in little pleasant humours; much more rather than to be loosing our minds, and banishing all sober thoughts away in exorbitant frolics: extremely wild or stupid would he seem, who in such a case should so behave himself: it is plainly the case of us all, in a degree infinitely more high than we can suppose any other to be: wherefore reflecting thereon should, methinks, quash all extravagant and dissolute mirth, apt to beat out of our minds and hearts the care of our souls; should compose our minds into a very serious frame; should presently

SERM. drive us into, and constantly hold us in, a sober sadness of heart ; it is a duty which both in wisdom
 XXXIII. and piety we do owe to this great matter, (*the terror of the Lord*, as St. Paul calleth it,) to fear and dread it : with which disposition of spirit excessive transports of carnal joy are scarce consistent : however let us hear (let us, I say, whose spirits are high, and fancies strong, hear) what the great observer of the world, the Preacher, doth admonish ;
 2 Cor. v. 11. *Rejoice*, saith he, *O young man, in thy youth ; and let thy heart cheer thee in the days of thy youth, and walk in the ways of thine heart, and in the sight of thine eyes : but know, that for all these things God will bring thee to judgment.*

4. The consideration of this point should engage us carefully to improve all the talents by God's providence and grace committed to us ; that is, all the means and abilities, all the advantages and opportunities afforded us of doing good, or serving God. Hath God bestowed wealth upon us ? this will engage us so to use it, as not therewith to cherish our pride, or pamper our luxury, not merely to gratify our pleasure or humour ; but to expend it in succouring our indigent neighbour, or otherwise promoting God's service. Hath God invested us with power ? this should induce us to use it moderately and fruitfully ; not therewith to domineer or insult over our brethren, not anywise to wrong or misuse them ; but to yield protection, aid, and comfort to them ; to afford patronage and succour to right ; to minister encouragement, support, and defence to
 Eph. vi. 9. *virtue ; remembering that we have also a Lord in heaven*, and a judge, to whom we must be accountable. Hath God vouchsafed us any parts, any

wit, any knowledge? this should move us to employ them, not so much in contriving projects to advance our own petty interests, or in procuring vain commendation to ourselves, as in setting forth God's praise, in recommending goodness, in drawing men with the most advantage we can to the practice of virtue and piety. Hath God conferred on us any thing of honour or credit among men? this may oblige us not to build high conceits upon it, or to find vain complacences therein; but to use it as an instrument of bringing honour to God, of ministering aid or countenance to the interests of piety: to those purposes, I say, this consideration greatly serveth; for that it is plainly declared, that we are but stewards of these things, having received them in trust, not to use them according to our pleasure, but to employ them with the best advantage for God's service; and accordingly shall in the last judgment be strictly accountable for them; so that if we have embezzled or perverted them to abuse, it will then appear far worse for us, than if we never had received them; much better indeed it will be for us, that we had been poorest beggars, silliest idiots, most despicable wretches here, than not to have duly improved our wealth, parts, and honour to God's service; *To whomsoever much is given, from him much shall be required,* is the rule that punctually in that great audit will be observed.

SERM.
XXXIII.

Matt. xxv.
14. xxiv. 45.

Luke xii.
48.

5. The consideration of this point may induce us to the observing strict justice and equity in all our dealings: there are in this world many advantages of doing injury and iniquity safely in respect to men; without intrenching upon human laws, without incurring any check, or any correction from them;

SERM. they reach to very few cases, they retrench only
 XXXIII. some great outrages, and punish some enormous crimes, apparently noxious to the peace or welfare of common society ;^c the stroke of human law may also (even where it taketh cognizance, where it maketh provision to secure right, or repair wrong) often be evaded by power, or eluded by sleight, by gift, by favour : but as the divine law doth extend universally to the prohibition of all iniquity whatever, (small as well as great, secret no less than visible,) so the divine judgment inevitably will reach to all : the least wrongful word, by which we hurt the good name of our neighbour, the least exaction or hard dealing with him, the least overreaching him by craft, (however blameless these things may seem here, however they may pass with commendation, as instances of wit or ability,) will surely then be con-
 1 Thess. iv. 6. demned and punished ; *Let no man, saith St. Paul, go beyond and defraud his brother in any matter, διότι ἔκδικος ὁ Κύριος περὶ πάντων τοιούτων, because God will judge and avenge for all these things ;* so that, as
 2 Cor. vi. 9. the same apostle teacheth us, *the unjust, the wrongful, the revilers, the rapacious, shall not inherit the kingdom of God ;* that day will detect all wicked fraud and cozenage, will defeat all unjust might and oppression ; no power shall be able to break through, no wit shall skill to decline, no friendship or favour will help to keep off the impartial sentence and the
 Job xxxiv. 22. irresistible stroke of that judgment ; *There is no darkness or shadow of death, where the workers of iniquity may hide themselves* from being detected, from being prosecuted and punished. The poor, the

^c Quam angusta innocentia est, ad legem bonum esse, quanto latius officiorum patet, quam juris regula ? *Sen. de Ir. ii. 27.*

meek, the simple, who rather choose to suffer than SERM.
do wrong, shall there find a certain patronage and XXXIII.
a full redress; that strict abstinence from wrong,
which here may pass for simplicity, shall then be
approved for the best wisdom; and this overreach-
ing craft, which now men are so conceited of, will
then appear wretched folly, when all ill-gotten pro-
fits with shameful regret shall in effect be refunded,
yea shall bring grievous damages and sore penalties
for them: in fine, then it will be most evident, that
he who injureth another doth indeed chiefly hurt
himself; he that cheateth his neighbour doth really
gull himself, and abuse his own soul.

6. The consideration of this point is apt to breed
charity in us; charity of all sorts; charity in giving,
charity in forgiving, charity in judging and censur-
ing of men.

1. It should incline us freely to impart our goods,
and to contribute our endeavours, for the relief of
our poor neighbour; for that the last judgment will
in especial manner proceed upon a regard to the
performance or the neglect of this duty: it shall be
the test of piety, and a ground of recompense at the
last day: to charitable persons, who had relieved him
in his poor brethren and members, our Lord himself
telleth us, that he will say, *Because I was hungry,* Matt. xxv.
and ye gave me meat; I was thirsty, and ye gave 35.
me drink; I was a stranger, and ye took me in;
I was naked, and ye clothed me; I was sick, and
ye visited me; I was in prison, and ye came unto
me; therefore, Come, ye blessed of my Father,
enter into the kingdom prepared for you from the
foundation of the world. To them, who contrarily
had neglected to succour and comfort their poor

SERM. brethren, he will pronounce the contrary doom;
 XXXIII. *Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire,*
 Matt. xxv. *prepared for the Devil and his angels: for I was*
 41. *hungry, and ye gave me no meat, &c.* And what argument can there be imagined more forcible to engage us on the practice of this duty?

2. It should likewise dispose us readily to forgive all injuries and discourtesies received from any man: for since we shall at that trial need abundance of favour and mercy from God, we should in all reason and duty be willing to shew the like to others for God's sake and at his command; especially since he hath appointed the doing so for an indispensable condition, without which we shall not receive mercy or pardon from him; so that infallibly, if we will be rigorous and hard to others in this case, we must expect the like extremity and severity from God: for the laws and rules of God's proceeding then are
 James ii. 13. *these; He shall have judgment without mercy,*
 Matt. vi. 15. *that hath shewed no mercy; If ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will God forgive you your trespasses:* and by a lively example, in way of history or parable, our Lord in the Gospel hath expressed what words (in case of our refusing to remit to our neighbour his debts and trespasses against us) we shall hear, what usage we shall find at that day;
 Matt. xviii. *O thou wicked servant, (will God say to any such*
 32. *unmerciful person of us,) I forgave thee all that debt, because thou desiredst me: shouldst not thou also have had compassion on thy fellow-servant, even as I had pity on thee? And the Lord was wroth, and delivered him to the tormentors, till he should pay all that was due unto him.*

3. It likewise serveth to restrain us from all un-

due, all rash and harsh censure concerning the persons, the actions, the state of our neighbour; where-^{SERM. XXXIII.}
by we do invade our Lord's office, making ourselves judges in his room; whereby we usurp his right, exercising jurisdiction over his subjects; whereby we arrogate to ourselves his attributes, who alone is able to know and judge rightly; *Why*, saith St. ^{Rom. xiv.} Paul, *dost thou judge thy brother? or why dost*^{10.}
thou set at nought thy brother? we shall all stand at the judgment seat of Christ; it is the office of Christ, which we must not encroach upon: and, *Who art thou* (doth he again expostulate) *that judg-*^{Rom. xiv.}
est another's servant? to his own master he stand-^{4.}
eth or falleth. We wrong our Lord, in assuming authority over his servants; we wrong our brethren, in making ourselves their masters: and, *Judge nothing before the time*, saith the same apostle, *until the Lord come, who shall enlighten the hidden things of darkness, and manifest the counsels of hearts.* We blind wretches in effect do make ourselves gods, and sacrilegiously assert his incommunicable perfections to ourselves, when we presume to search the hearts, or pretend to know the secret intentions of our brethren. Again, *There is*, saith ^{James iv.} another apostle, *one Lawgiver, who can save or de-*^{12.}
stroy: who art thou that judgest another? that is, how intolerably rash, unjust, and arrogant art thou, who seatest thyself upon God's tribunal, and thence dost adventure to pronounce 'doom upon his people! Did we indeed well consider this judgment, we should rather think it advisable to be mindful of our own case, than to pass sentence upon that of others; observing how liable ourselves are, we should scarce have the heart to carp at others; finding what great

SERM. need our actions will then have of favourable inter-
 XXXIII. pretation, we should surely be more candid and mild
 in censuring other men's actions; especially considering, that by harsh judgment of others we make our own case worse, and inflame our reckoning; we directly thence incur guilt, we aggravate our own offences, and render ourselves inexcusable; we expose ourselves upon that score to condemnation; for,

Matt. vii. 2. *With what judgment we judge, we shall be judged;*
 Luke vi. 37. *and with what measure we mete, it shall be mea-*

Rom. ii. 1, 3. *sured to us again,* our Lord doth say: and, *Inex-*
cusable, saith St. Paul, *thou art, O man, whoever*
thou art that judgest; for wherein thou judgest
another, thou condemnest thyself: and, *μὴ στενάζετε*

James v. 9. *κατ' ἀλλήλων, Do not,* saith St. James, *grudge* (or
 make moanful complaint) *against one another, lest*
you be condemned: behold, the Judge standeth
before the doors.

7. It serveth also to support and comfort us, as
 against all other wrongful dealing, so against injuries
 of this kind; against all unjust and uncharitable
 censures, groundless slanders and surmises, unde-
 served scorns and reproaches of men; for that as-
 suredly at that judgment right will be done to him
 that suffereth in this kind; his innocence will be
 cleared, his good name will be vindicated and re-
 paired; *God will bring forth his righteousness as*
 Ps. xxxvii. 6. *the light, and his judgment as the noonday;* whence
 approving his conscience to God in well-doing, he
 1 Cor. iv. 3. may cheerfully say with St. Paul, *With me it is a*
very small thing, that I should be judged of you,
 1 John iii. 21. *or of man's judgment: If our heart do not condemn*
us, we may (whatever the opinions or discourses of
 man be concerning us) *have a cheerful boldness and*

comfortable hope in regard to God: the obloquy of men is a part of that cross which every good man here is appointed to bear, and assuredly shall meet with^c; for the Devil and the world do nothing, if they cannot by impudent assaults dash, or by malicious suggestions blast the practice of goodness: but this consideration may easily raise us to bear it with patience, or with resolution to surmount it; it thence appearing, that it nowise can harm us; for if God is our judge, what can the fancies or the tattles of men concern us; *I will not fear the judgment of men, who shall have God for my judge*, was with good reason said by St. Jerome.

SERM.
XXXIII.

Non timebo
hominum
judicium,
habiturus
judicem
Deum.
Hier.

8. It upon the like ground should preserve us from being deluded and poisoned by the more favourable opinions of men. There are visibly two great rocks, upon which frequently men do split, and make shipwreck of good conscience; compliance with the practice, and regard to the opinions of others. Men out of complaisance accompany others in doing ill^f; it is called good-nature, it is deemed good manners to do it; so very civilly and genteelly, very nobly and gallantly they go on to perdition, giving up their salvation, in compliment and courtesy to one another: then it is but natural for this most debonnair and generous dealing to requite one another with good words at least, or with some demonstrations of esteem; and it is no less natural

^c Καὶ πάντες δικάζουσιν, ὁ δὲ δικαστὴς ἀποψηφίζεται, οὐδεὶς μοι λόγος τῆς ἐκείνων ψήφου, καὶ ἅπαντες ἐπαινέσωσι καὶ θαυμάσωσιν, ἐκεῖνος δὲ με καταδικάζει, οὐδὲν μοι πάλιν ὄφελος τῆς ἐκείνων κρίσεως. Chrys. tom. viii. p. 98.

^f Nihil omnino agimus, qui nos per exempla multitudinis defendimus, et ad consolationem nostram aliena sæpe numerantes vitia, deesse nobis dicimus, quos debeamus sequi. Hier.

SERM. for those who are thus flattered, to comply with
XXXIII. the opinions of others, and to judge of themselves
 accordingly, thinking themselves good because they
 are called so:⁸ but to keep ourselves from being
 upon such occasions, or upon any the like grounds,
 perniciously cozened, we should consider, that in the
 great judgment the esteem of men will import no-
 thing of advantage to us; things will pass there as
 they are in themselves, not as they are rated here;
 according to real truth and intrinsic worth, not ac-
 cording to the conceits or affections of ignorant and
 partial men: even the things that appear fairest
 here may prove foul there; persons much approved
 and applauded now may then be condemned and re-
 jected; for *God seeth not as man seeth; for man*
looketh on the outward appearance, but God look-
eth on the heart. God then will *search the hearts*
and weigh the spirits of men; he will scan their
 designs and intentions; he will closely examine their
 tempers, and exactly poise their circumstances; he
 will consider many things inscrutable to men, upon
 which the true worth of persons and real merit of
 actions do depend; wherefore most vain and unsafe
 it is to rely upon the uncertain opinions of men, or
 to please ourselves with them; they neither can out
 of blindness, or will out of passion, interest, partial-
 ity, judge truly.

9. If we desire to judge reasonably about ourselves,
 or to know our true state, the only way is to com-

⁸ Quæ est hæc tanta levitas animi, quæ tanta vanitas, relicta propria conscientia alienam opinionem sequi, et quidem fictam atque simulatam, rapi vento falsæ laudationis gaudere ad circumventionem suam, et illusionem pro beneficio accipere? *Hier. ad Celantiam.*

pare our hearts and lives with the law of God, judging ourselves by that rule, according to which God will judge us. If we find in our hearts the love of God and goodness, (sincere, although imperfect;) if we perceive ourselves disposed to keep God's commandments, (to live piously, righteously, and soberly in this world;) then may we have a satisfactory hope concerning our state; then *we may*, as St. John saith, *have confidence toward God, because we keep his commandments, and do those things that are pleasing to him*: but if we do not find that mind in us, and that practice, we, in conceiting well of ourselves upon any other grounds, do but flatter and impose upon ourselves; if all the world should account us good, and take us to be in a good case, we should not at all believe them, or mind them; for, *Let no man deceive us; he that doeth righteousness, he (and he alone) is righteous*, is the most faithful advice and unquestionable sentence of St. John. It is therefore (that by resting on such false bottoms we be not abused, and drawn thence to neglect the amendment of our hearts and ways, in order to our final account) a duty incumbent on us thus to search our hearts and try our ways, and accordingly to judge ourselves: the doing which with care and conscience would dispose us to prepare for the judgment we speak of; for, *If*, saith St. Paul, *we would judge ourselves, we should not be judged*, or not condemned.

SERM.
XXXIII.

1 John iii.
21, 22.

1 John iii. 7.

1 Cor. iv. 4.

1 Cor. iii. 31.
Gal. vi. 3.
Ps. lxxvii.
6, 10.

10. The consideration of this point will guard us from infidelity and from impatience in regard to the providential dispensation of affairs here: considering it, we shall not be offended at passages otherwise unaccountable and scandalous to Providence; we

SERM. shall not wonder that so many disorders occur in the
 XXXIII. world; that right is perverted, that fraud and violence do prevail, that vice doth reign; we shall not complain of the adversities incident to good men, nor repine at the prosperities of bad men; we shall not be dissatisfied with any event here befalling ourselves or others; since from hence it doth most evidently appear, that all these things are consistent with the wisdom, goodness, and justice of God, and do assuredly tend to the declaration of those glorious attributes; yea, that consequently the worst accidents here, if we are faithful to God and to ourselves, will finally conduce to our advantage and benefit, according to that of the apostle, *We know that all things work together for good to them that love God.*

Rom. viii.
28.

11. In fine, there is no consideration able to promise so much efficacy toward the rousing our passions, or duly ordering and settling them upon religious practice. It especially is apt to set on work those two grand engines and mighty springs of activity, hope and fear; and with them to raise their respective companions, joy and grief: for how, if we have been very culpable in the transgression or neglect of our duty, can we reflect on this point without being seized with an hideous dread of coming to so strict a trial, of falling under so heavy a sentence? how can we think of it without a bitter remorse? Hard as rocks surely we must be, if such thoughts do not pierce us; utterly dead and senseless must our hearts be, if they do not feel the sting of such considerations; more stupid and stony we then are, than the dissolute Felix, who could not without affrightment hear plain discourse concerning the

Acts xxiv.

25.
"Εμφοβος
γινόμενος.

judgment to come; yea, more inconsiderate and insensible we appear, than those obstinate sons of darkness, the devils themselves, who *believe and tremble* thereat. SERM. XXXIII.
Jam. ii. 29.

If, on the other hand, we are conscious to ourselves of having seriously and carefully endeavoured to please God, and obey his commandments, how can we think of it without a comfortable hope of finding mercy and favour in that day! If in our hearts we can say with St. Paul, *I have combated the good combat, I have finished* (or I have continued) *the race, I have kept the faith*; then may we hopefully say after him, as he said confidently before us, *From henceforth is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which in that day the Lord, the righteous Judge, shall render unto me.* If by virtue of the saving grace of God, which hath appeared to all men, and according to its holy instructions, we have *denied ungodliness and worldly lusts, living soberly, righteously, and piously, in this present world*; then may we joyfully expect the blessed hope, and the appearance of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ; then may we indeed heartily wish, cheerfully hope, and earnestly pray for that day; doing which is the character, and hath been the practice of the best men; *The Lord, saith St. Paul, will render the crown of righteousness to all them who love his appearance*; and, *Looking for and hastening the presence of the day of God*, saith St. Peter, intimating the practice of the primitive Christians; and, *Yea, come, O Lord Jesus*, is St. John's petition in the close of the Revelation, and may be the prayer of those who have the like conscience and affections with him. 2 Tim. iv. 7, 8. i. 18.
Tit. ii. 12, 13.
1 Cor. i. 7.
Phil. iii. 20.
Tit. ii. 9.
2 Tim. iv. 8.
2 Pet. iii. 12.
Rev. xxii. 20.

SERM. I conclude, wishing and exhorting that the medi-
 XXXIII. tation of this most important affair may be continu-
 ally present to our minds; that we may seem, with
 that devout man, always to hear the last trump
 sounding in our ears, and through our hearts; that
 so with a pious awe and with a well-grounded hope
 we may expect *the coming of our Lord*, and may
love his appearance; that from hence, being effectually
 restrained from all impious and vicious conver-
 sation, being induced to a circumspect and watchful
 pursuit of all piety and virtue, guiding our lives *in-*
offensively in all good conscience toward God and
man, we may in the end be able to render a good
 account, and with comfort unexpressible may at that
 day, from the mouth of our Judge, hear those happy
 words, *Well done, good and faithful servants, enter*
into your Master's joy; Come, ye blessed of my
Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from
the foundation of the world. Unto the possession
 whereof, Almighty God in his infinite mercy, by the
 grace of his holy Spirit, vouchsafe to bring us,
 through the merits of our blessed Saviour Jesus
 Christ; to whom for ever be all glory and praise.
 Amen.

1 Thess. v. *The very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and*
 23. *I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body*
may be preserved blameless unto the coming of our
Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.



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